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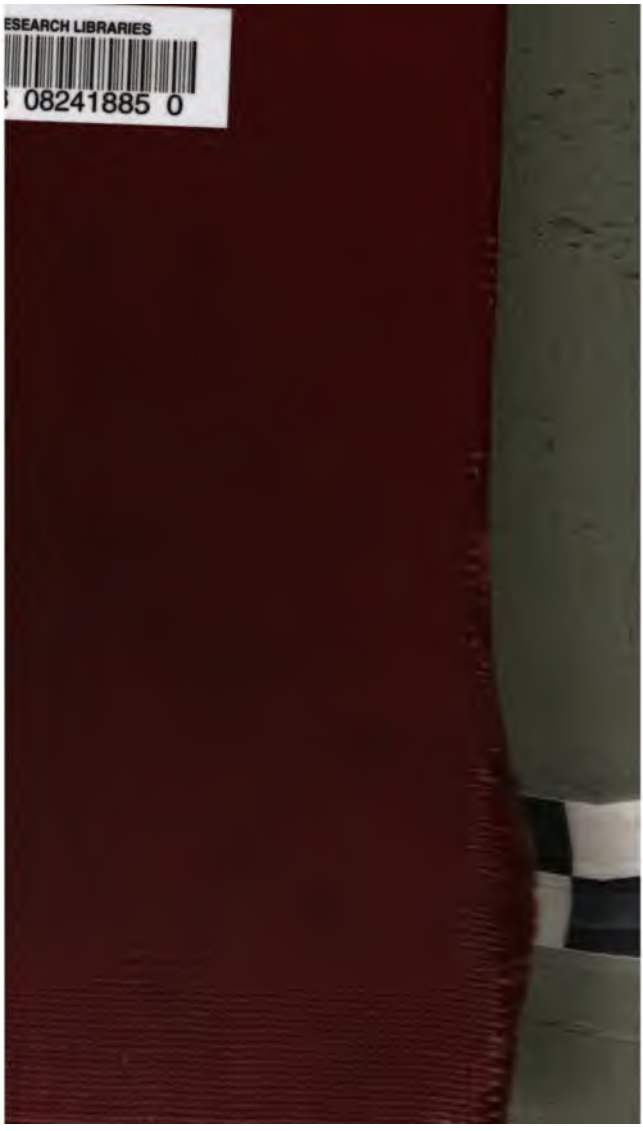
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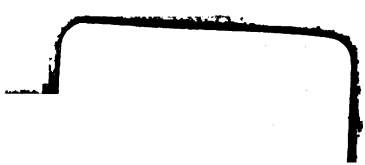

THE

MOST REMARKABLE YEAR

IN

THE LIFE

OF

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE;

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

HIS EXILE INTO SIBERIA,

AND OF

The other extraordinary Events which happened to him

IN RUSSIA.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, BY

THE REV. BENJAMIN BERESFORD,

English Lecturer to the Queen of Prussia.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE

MOST REMARKABLE YEAR OF MY LIFE,

&c. &c.

AT this period I found myself suddenly emancipated from the troublesome business of the theatre, and in the most agreeable manner. The Emperor had just finished his famous palace of *Michaïloff*. Enamoured with this fairy castle, which rose out of the earth as it were by magic, and which had cost between fifteen and eighteen millions of rubles, he preferred it to all his other habitations, and left, among the rest, his *Winter Palace* as it is called, an healthy and commodious building, to shut himself up among damp walls, down which the water still continued to trickle. His Physcians were ordered to examine at several different times the state of this

new edifice, and each time they warned him of the danger he would incur by residing in it. But perceiving they were continually sent to repeat their examination, in order to weary them into a more favourable judgment, they at last surrendered up their sincerity.

The Emperor took up his abode in this mephitic mansion in the depth of winter, and was highly delighted with it. He felt much pleasure in conducting his guests over the whole edifice, and in shewing them the various treasures which he had procured at a vast expence from Paris and Rome. The extravagant praises which were of course lavished upon mere trifles, and the exclamation a thousand times repeated that "all was divine, *unique!*" at length possessed him with the idea of having drawn up a detailed description of this eighth wonder of the world. He charged me with this task

in the most flattering manner. More than once he was pleased to tell me that he expected to see something extraordinary produced by my pen, and threw me into great embarrassment by the high expectation he had formed relative to my work. He lent me *The Description of Berlin and Potsdam*, written by *Nicolai*, from his own library; at the same time expressing a wish that my description might be *still more detailed* than Nicolai's.

I complied immediately with the Monarch's orders.—I observed however that I was deficient in many branches of knowledge necessary to produce this work; that I knew not how to describe, in proper terms, the several beauties of architecture, sculpture, and painting; that I presumed therefore to request that I might be allowed the assistance of able men in these different departments. The request was instantly granted. I

proposed for antiquities the Aulic Counsellor *Kohler*, keeper of the cabinet of curiosities at the Hermitage, a man equally able and obliging. For architecture I named *Brenna* the Roman; and for painting the two brothers *Kugelkhen*, whose admirable talents and amiable manners are generally known.

His Majesty with great goodness consented to every thing I proposed; and gave orders that I should have access to every part of the palace at all hours. The Grand Marshal, as captain of the palace, made the tour with me the first time, and I then set about my task.

I spent the greater part of every day in this edifice: I was there in the morning, the afternoon, and often late in the evening. I frequently met the Emperor as I was busied in noting down my observations. He always stopped, and spake to me in a very friendly manner;

and often exhorted me to describe nothing superficially, but to enter into the most complete detail.

I availed myself of this opportunity to request my discharge from the managership of the theatre, and presented my petition in writing to Count de Narischkin the 8th of February. The Count made many flattering objections; but perceiving that I persisted in my solicitations, he postponed the matter to a future day. In a short time however I renewed my solicitation, nor did I cease my importunity till I clearly discovered the inefficacy of my applications. I then petitioned for some alleviation of the burthen imposed upon me; alledging that my attendance at Michailoff did not allow me sufficient time to superintend the affairs of the theatre; and that if my discharge should be denied, I had no expedient left but to ask

for a colleague. This last request was granted; and the choice of the colleague was left to myself. In this manner I obtained, in the person of one of my friends, an assistant, with a salary of fifteen hundred rubles and a yearly benefit; and upon him I was thus enabled to throw a great part of that load of troubles inseparable from a situation of that nature.

I must take this opportunity of refuting an absurd paragraph which has crept into the gazette *für de elegante Welt*. It asserts, in the first place, that *I wearied out the actors in making them study their parts*. I apprehend that the man who furnished this article is himself some idle player, constantly imperfect in his part, since I never allowed less than a fortnight for the most trivial characters. In the same place he asserts, that my pieces alone were represented. A

most ridiculous reproach! The greater part of the new pieces in fact were mine, because it was not possible to obtain others. All Europe knows that no manuscript was suffered to pass the frontiers; that all books, even the bible, were proscribed. How then could I procure new plays? I had only *The Remembrances* of Iffland, and *The Incognito* of Ziegler, and two or three more which Miré had left in the stock of the theatre. These I had given, and others *I could not give.* I appeal to the testimony of Iffland himself, who will declare that I had written to him to send me some of his new pieces, closely transcribed in the form of letters. Even this was a dangerous expedient; and since I obtained nothing in this manner, I could only give old stock pieces; for I was nearly at the end of my own. Such an attack is really scandalous, since the

writer, if he actually wrote from Petersburg, must have been fully convinced of the injustice of the charge.

What he has further written against me has been already refuted, or shall be in the sequel. The reader, I trust, will pardon this digression on a subject in which my honour is so materially concerned.

The description of the palace was nearly completed when the Emperor died. As the greater part of the valuable articles which it contained were soon after removed; and as the building itself, as well as the whole arrangement of it, throws considerable light upon the taste, and even the character of that Prince, I shall gratify the wishes of several of my friends, and I trust indulge the curiosity of many of my readers, by the insertion of an abridgment of a long and painful work.

A Short Description of the Imperial Palace of Michaïloff.

This edifice stands at the confluence of the Moïka and the Fontanka, and occupies the ground on which the summer palace of Peter the Great had been erected. The Empress Elizabeth caused many alterations to be made therein: being built of wood however it soon fell into decay; and a Phœnix has risen from its ashes.*

The garden street terminates with a portal. Eight doric columns of red marble, the produce of the country, support a number of trophies, and three gates open between four pillars of granite. The Emperor's cypher (interwoven with the Maltese cross) with eagles, crowns, and garlands, in gilt bronze, ornament the gates and pallisades. The middle gate is never opened except for the Imperial

* For a description of the Moïka, the Fontanka, the summer palace, &c. see Storch's Picture of Petersburg.

family. These gates lead to a triple row of linden and birch trees, three hundred feet long, planted in the reign of the Empress Anne. This alley is bounded on the left by the exercise room, an immense edifice of an oblong square, which is never warm during winter, although furnished with twenty four huge stoves. On the right the walk is bordered by the stable walls: it is terminated by two pavilions intended for the lodgings of the officers of the Imperial household.

A drawbridge leads over a canal thirty feet wide, faced with free stone, to the grand area before the palace, which is three hundred and thirty feet long, and sixty feet wide. In the middle stands a colossal equestrian statue in bronze of Peter the Great, upon a marble pedestal, raised upon four steps. The horse seems in motion; the rider is

dressed in a Roman habit, and crowned with a laurel wreath. An Italian of the name of *Martelli* cast this statue in the year 1744, in the reign of Elizabeth; and it had lain forgotten under a shed ever since. The esteem the great grandson entertained for his ancestor drew it out of its obscurity. On the pedestal is the following inscription:

PRODAEDU PRAVNUCH.*

On the right and left sides of this pedestal are two bass-reliefs in bronze, representing the battle of Pultava, and the taking of Schlusselburg.

We now come to the front of the palace. Each side of this edifice measures two hundred and ninety four feet, independent of the salient angles. The building is surrounded on all sides by canals, which are supplied

* The great grandson to his great grandfather.

by the Fontanka: they are ornamented with quays of granite, over which are thrown five drawbridges. The foundations of the palace are nine feet deep, and composed of large piles driven close to each other, and cased with strong pieces of timber.

The subterraneous part, and the first story, are built with blocks of granite, and the two other stories with brick, incrusted in part with marble. The rest is covered with a reddish stucco, which colour tradition ascribes to a trait of chivalrous gallantry. A lady of the court having one day appeared in gloves of that hue, it is positively said that the Emperor sent one of them as a pattern to the plaisterer. It must be confessed, however, that such a colour suited a pair of gloves much better than the walls of a palace. Many of the inhabitants of Petersburg seized that opportunity of

flattering the Emperor, and daubed their houses with this colour. Madame Chevalier carried this species of flattery still farther; she made choice of the colour for the part of Iphigenia.

The reader may form some idea of the impression with which a stranger must be struck on approaching this edifice. It is a monstrous mass of red stone, environed with ditches and drawbridges, and encumbered with twenty pieces of large brass cannon, many of the various ornaments of which are directly contrary to the common rules of art. The two large obelisks of grey marble, for instance, at the entrance of the principal front, reach to the top of the edifice and support the Emperor's cypher in bronze, with trophies of white marble; and near them are the two statues, Diana and the Belvedere Apollo, which being placed in small niches, produce a mean

effect, merely on account of their situation: above these is a colonade of the doric order, sustaining a rustic portal; a frontispiece of Parian marble, the work of the two *Stagis*, likewise catches the eye, presenting History under the figure of Fame, as she appears on Trajan's column: on the attic two goddesses of glory support the Imperial arms, and on the roof, which is over-laid with green varnish, appear struggling groups of statues, representing Cybeles crowned with towers and bearing on their shields, the arms of the Russian provinces. Upon the frieze, which is composed of porphyry of the country, we read the following words.

DOMU TVOJEMU PODOVAJET
SVATUNA GOSPODNA V'DOLGOTU DNEI.*

* Holiness becometh thine house for ever. *Psalm* xciii, *verse* 5.

And lastly, above the gate, upon a ground of black marble, we behold this inscription;

VOSKRESENSKIJA.*

Such is the grotesque assemblage of objects which excites the stranger's surprize, each of which, if taken separately, would display many beauties; but which, grouped as they are, produce an effect disgusting to true taste. The architect, whose name is *Brenna*, ascribes the whole composition to the Emperor himself, who, according to his account, even sketched the designs; but some people doubt this assertion.

The church starts out in the form of an oval from the second front. It is incrusted with grey Siberian marble, and decorated with bass-reliefs, representing the four Evangelists, with a cornice of cherubs, together with two statues

* The Sabbath gate.

standing in niches, the one of Religion, and the other of Faith.* On the attic are two statues of St. Peter and St. Paul on each side of a cross. A gilt tower finishes the dome of the church; the cupola is hung with four chandeliers, which, as well as the dome itself, and the cross, are of gilded bronze.

Over a door, not far from the church, we read this word, inscribed on a black marble ground:

ROSQHESTWENSKIJA.†

I endeavoured in vain to discover the Monarch's intention in the choice he had made of the two last inscriptions. A man of high consequence, however, advised me to leave them untranslated in my description.

* These two beautiful statues, by Conradini, were brought hither from the summer-gardens, and are more fully described in Storch's Picture of Petersburg, p. 431.

† The gate of the Resurrection.

The third front overlooks the summer-garden: a circular stair-case, containing twenty-six steps of Serdopol granite, leads to a large hall, supported by ten doric pillars of red marble. The floor white; on each side are two Egyptian ues of *bardiglio de Carrara*, a hard e, resembling in colour a basalt. The landing-place of the stair-case is graced on each side with six doric columns of red marble, over which rises an attic, surrounded by a balustrade, which serves as a *belvedere*. To these ornaments are likewise added the statues of Prudence and Strength, which stand in two niches. In the cupola of an adjacent pavilion, is the palace clock; and when the Emperor is here, the Imperial flag is hoisted on a small tower, which forms a part of the pavilion.

Having thus surveyed the exterior of the palace, we shall enter it on the side

of the grand front; and the *Sabbath-door* will lead us under a peristyle, which forms an oblong square. On each side the coach-way, which divides the peristyle, rises a colonade containing twenty-four doric pillars: each pillar is composed of a single block of granite; the bases and capitals of which are of Raskol marble. In the midst of the colonade are placed the copies of the Medicean and Borghesian vases,* in white marble, and on one side stand two colossal statues in niches, the one, representing Hercules with his club, and the other, Alexander the Great.

After having traversed the peristyle, we come to the interior area of the palace, an octagon of one hundred and ninety-eight feet diameter, and which

* Brought from the Tauridan palace, where they were placed by prince Potemkin, and are of exquisite workmanship.

lies six feet higher than the circumjacent level. The Imperial Family and Ambassadors are alone permitted to drive through this court.

It would be impossible to count how often the Emperor's cypher is repeated within and without this edifice: in the interior court the piers of the windows and all the adjacent parts are filled with it. In this area, in eight niches, stand as many statues of wretched workmanship; they are intended to represent Strength, Plenty, Victory, Glory, &c. but they are miserably executed, and furnish new proof of the disgusting contrast of the luxury and want of taste which prevail through the whole palace.

Four large flights of steps, and two of less dimensions, lead from the area to the inside of the palace, and are terminated by large glass doors; but without passing through the court we enter on

the left side of the peristyle into an oval room, where thirty soldiers and one officer of the regiment of life-guards remain always upon duty. This party is continually relieved by another of the same regiment, while the rest of the palace is guarded by soldiers of several different regiments. The spot where these thirty men mount guard has been very judiciously chosen; the hall they occupy extending on one side to the extremity of the peristyle, and on the other to the state stair-case; no one could approach the Emperor without passing close to the guard-house. The granite steps of this stair-case rise between two balustrades of gray Siberian marble, intermixed with pilasters of polished bronze. The walls are incrusted with various kinds of marble, and the compartments were intended to be painted in fresco. On the landing place stood

a fine copy in white marble of the Capitoline Cleopatra; on each side were seen the statues of Prudence and Justice in niches. At the top of the staircase two grenadiers stand always upon guard.

I have led the reader as far as the grand mahogany doors, the pannels of which are richly ornamented with shields and arms, and Gorgons' heads finely worked in bronze. The door on the right opens into the state apartments of the Emperor.

From an oval anti-chamber, in which we behold with pleasure the bust of Gustavus Adolphus, and with pity an allegorical ceiling painted by a Russian dauber of the name of *Smuglevitseh*, we pass into a spacious room plaistered with spotted yellow stucco. For the sake of brevity, I shall mention only the principal ornaments of each chamber. In this room were six historical pictures,

sixteen feet in height and twelve in width. The subjects are as follows: *The battle of Pultava*, by *Schebujeff*, a fine composition, full of force and expression, in which Peter the Great and General Schermetoff are the principal figures. *The taking of Casan*, by the Czar Ivan Vasilevitsch, painted by *Ogrumoff*, a well-grouped piece. *The Coronation of Michael Fedorowitsch Romanow*, Grandfather to Peter the Great, a good picture, the work of *Ogrumoff*, who deserves to be ranked among the best historical painters of his time. *The Union of the Russian and Turkish Fleets*, and their common passage through the Dardanelles, by *Pretschetnikoff*, an indifferent representation of a memorable event, though not deficient in aerial perspective. *The Victory of Prince Demetrius Ivanovitsch Donsky* over the Tartars of the Don in the Plains of Kulikoff, and *The Baptism of the great*

Duke of Vladimir, painted by an Englishman of the name of * *Atkinson*, whose pencil has a bold and striking effect; though he is far from being faultless with regard to his outlines.†

I shall now introduce the reader into the throne-chamber, which is seventy feet long and thirty wide. It was perfectly well fitted up, and the sight of it created respect and confidence. I shall not speak of the hangings of green velvet embroidered with gold, nor of the magnificent furniture, nor the colossal stove, twenty-six feet in height, and almost covered with bronze. The throne was covered with red velvet richly worked in gold. On the back were displayed

* Mr. John Atkinson, a young artist of great talents. He was brought up under his father-in-law, Mr. James Walker, and finished his studies at the Academy of Arts.

† The Emperor's funeral decorations have since been erected in this room.

the arms of Russia, surrounded with those of the kingdoms of Kasan and Astrakhan, of Siberia and Great Russia. In various niches, directly opposite to the throne, and over the doors, were filled with antique busts of Julius Cæsar, Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus, and others. Above these appeared colossal statues of Justice, Peace, Victory, and Glory; and round the chambers were displayed the arms of all the provinces subject to the Russian sceptre, seventy-six in number, emblematically representing the different inhabitants of this vast empire. It must be confessed, that these decorations, which were invented by the Monarch himself, could not have been better chosen, and they manifested, whatever the world may choose to say, the noble and chivalrous spirit that animated his breast.

Among the superb furniture of this chamber, a looking-glass, the largest in

the palace, is worthy of notice. It is of one single plate, nearly twelve feet in height and seven wide. There are likewise three magnificent tables worthy the admiration of the curious, one of *verde antica*, and the others of oriental green porphyry. Each of these is upwards of six feet long and two feet wide; they are supported by brass and bronze columns four feet high. A vast sconce of bronze hung from the ceiling, which is decorated with two allegorical paintings, very indifferently executed, by *Vareliani*. The banner of the Order of Malta was introduced into both these pictures.

From the throne-chamber we pass into the Arabesque gallery, through a door placed between two beautiful doric pillars of oriental porphyry, which were purchased at Rome. On the cornice stood the busts of Marcus Aurelius, with several large vases of red Siberian por-

phyry. Five niches were filled with as many statues, copied in Italy from antiques, and representing the Venus de Medici, Antinous Germanicus, the Apollo of Florence, and the Venus Callipygia. The architecture of this gallery is in the style of the famous chamber of Raphael at the Vatican, and like that wholly ornamented with arabesques in different colours, by *Pietro Scoti*, the figures were painted by *Vighi*; the work, however, remains unfinished.

From this room we pass through a large glass door into the laocoon gallery, so called from the celebrated group of that name, copied at Rome from the original, composed of one single block of marble without spot or vein, and transported to Petersburg without the least accident.

The walls are decorated with four superb Gobelins hangings, twelve feet

square, representing *Saint Peter fishing —Jesus driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple—The Resurrection of Lazarus*, and *Mary Magdalene anointing the feet of our Saviour*. Two groups taken from ancient fable form a strange contrast with the above scriptural subjects: these are copies by *Pacetti*, from the celebrated *Canova* of *Diana and Endymion*, and *Cupid and Psyche*. At one glance the eye catches the figure of Jesus Christ and that of the perpetual sleeper.

Over the doors are two pictures by *Dallera* of Rome, in wax colours; the subjects are *Ulysses finding Penelope*, and *Hector taking leave of Andromache*. They are already damaged by the dampness of their position; the latter is almost cracked in two.

I shall not speak of the valuable tables of *breccia* and oriental alabaster, the chairs of velvet, the various bronzes, all executed at Paris, &c. I shall only men-

tion some of the innumerable clocks that were to be seen all over the palace. In this room there was one, in which the four Seasons were represented in bronze in a car drawn by lions, and conducted by one of the Genii. The wheel served as a dial-plate. The observer, by looking upwards, would soon dissipate all the effect this curious piece of mechanism might have produced on his mind, by the sight of pictures which disfigure the cieling; that in the middle, representing *the Choice of Hercules*, is the least objectionable of the three; on the right is *Courage accompanied by Merit*, on the left *Justice and Peace embracing each other*; these are all painted by *Smuglevitsch*, an abortive son of the Muses and Graces. It must be observed, however, that the Emperor himself had furnished the subjects of this cieling; he it was who associated justice and peace, courage and merit together. It had been well had he

committed the execution of these designs to a more able hand. But such was his general conduct. The source of his actions was always pure and benevolent, but the agents of his intentions were frequently corrupt.

Two life-guard subalterns stood centinel, with spontoons in their hands, at the entrance of an oval apartment, in which sixteen Corinthian columns of stucco supported an attic, the ceiling of which rested upon as many caryatides, executed by *Albani*. Five allegorical basreliefs, that set all explanation at defiance, filled up the intervals. The furniture of this room was of flame-coloured velvet, worked on silver, which produced a fine effect.

The ceiling painted by *Vighi*, and of a different description from those just mentioned, represents the Gods in Olympus. Jupiter seems to be absorbed in a

flood of glory, and the whole composition bespeaks the hand of a distinguished artist.

Near this apartment is the Marble Hall, the guard-house of the Knights of Malta, which measures ninety feet in length, thirty in breadth, and near forty-two in height. The architecture is composed of two different orders; the walls are divided, as high as the attic, into vast compartments, decorated with *breccia corolina de Genova*, and black Porto-Venese marble. The long and flat sconces of polished bronze, which are fixed at proper distances in the walls, produced a good effect upon the black ground. At one end of the wall is an orchestra of white marble, surrounded by a balustrade of polished bronze, on which were ranged ten large vase chandeliers. The ceiling was naked, a Parnassus was then painting at Rome to cover it.

A large niche, formed and supported by two superb Ionic columns of Siberian marble, divided the hall into two equal parts. A chimney-piece of white marble, sustained by four termes, and incrusted with lapis lazuli and agate, is constructed in this niche. Two other chimnies are built on each side, in similar niches, and afford fine specimens of *gipolino antico*, a rare marble, resembling green petrified wood. The niches were adorned with statues, copied at Rome from the antique, representing Bacchus, Mercury, Flora, and Venus. I pass over the clocks, sconces, vases, small statues, and all the curious ornaments in bronze, which contributed to the decoration of the apartment.

At one end of this hall is a grand niche formed by two large Ionic columns, and containing a door-way,

through which we pass into the circular throne-chamber.

Sixteen Atlases of colossal size sustain the dome. The walls are hung with red velvet embroidered with gold, and decorated with gilt carvings. The windows are concealed by curtains of the same stuff except one, which is composed of a single pane of glass, and framed in solid silver. The throne differs in no respect from that already described, except in the number of steps, the former being composed of eight, and this of only three. One sconce of nine, and eight others of seven feet in height, ornamented this apartment; they were all of massy silver, highly polished, worked in one piece, and were purchased at the manufactory of the ingenious M. Buch, Counsellor of State in the kingdom of Denmark. The ceiling, which

is painted in *camæin* and gold, intermixed with arabesques, was executed by *Carlo Scoti*.

Some time before his death, the Emperor had ordered several alterations to be made in this room. The red velvet hangings were to have been stripped off, to give place to others of yellow velvet, finely embroidered in silver. In the corners were to have been placed large roses of massy silver, with medallions and wreaths of laurel of the same metal. The two tables, the stands, the clocks, &c. were likewise to have been of silver, and the court goldsmiths had already been furnished with fourteen hundred pounds weight of that metal for this purpose.

From this room a door opens into the inner apartments of the Empress. The first chamber was hung with tapestry of sky-blue ground, upon which were re-

presented various views of the Castle of Pavlofsky. At the bottom of the room is a niche sustained by two superb Doric columns of porphyry, before which is placed the group of Apollo and Daphne, copied in Carrara marble from Bernini. Vases, clocks, tables of porphyry, agate, oriental alabaster, *rosso antico*, and bronze were ornamentally scattered over the chamber. Paintings in wax-colours by *Dallera* adorned the door-tops; and the ceiling, as well as most of the others in the palace, was painted in fresco by *Cadenacci*.

Two doors formed of mahogany, rose-wood, and cedar, embossed with gilt carvings, and encrusted with white marble, lapis lazuli, and malachite, lead us into a cabinet as much overcharged with ornaments as the doors themselves, and with which the eye quickly grows distracted and fatigued. The walls are

of grey Siberian marble, with compartments of lapis-lazuli, &c. and a wainscot of *giallo* and *nero antico*; the cornice lapis lazuli with lions heads in bronze; the cornice is topped with bass reliefs raised upon a polished golden ground. The *divans* or sofas, the stools, and the curtains were cloth of gold: a niche was formed by two Corinthian columns of fine oriental alabaster of entire pieces; the pedestals encrusted with *verde antico* and lapis-lazuli; there was likewise a group in white marble, representing Castor and Pollux, the work of *Albagini*; and in two small niches the Tragic and the Comic Muses. The chimney-piece was of *verde antico*, malachite, and bronze; besides these were tables, vases, and small statues in agate, bronze, &c. together with a quantity of fine china painted with arabesques in the manner of Raphael. All these and many other articles which I have not

named, were crouded into a closet of twelve feet square.

The closet opens into the state bedroom, which is more plainly, and therefore more agreeably furnished. This chamber is very spacious. The walls are of stucco, covered with festoons painted upon a polished gold ground.

The bed, which is richly carved and gilt, is surrounded by a balustrade of massy silver of four hundred and ninety pounds weight. Over the bed is a sky-blue velvet canopy, suspended by six silver strings. The cornice is supported by Corinthian columns, and painted in arabesque, upon a polished gold ground. The interstices of the columns are furnished with *divans* of blue velvet, and vast looking-glasses, composed of single plates. The chimney is of white Carrara marble, with a cornice ornamented with lapis-lazuli, and Florentine Mosaic work

of amethyst and other fine stones, representing various kinds of fruit in the most natural manner. An allegorical ceiling, indifferently painted by *Valerini*, seemed to be very difficult to unravel.

The chamber next to the state bedroom was fitted up in a plain style, and has served at one time for an eating, and at another for a concert room. Besides two chimney-pieces and some porphyry vases, the room affords nothing remarkable. It interested me however exceedingly, as it was the play-room of the young Grand Dukes. I have many times found them here; they are two lively spirited princes, and extremely affable and polite to all ranks of people. The tenderness of the Empress mother, whose soul is wrapped up in her children, had provided against accidents by having caused pillows to be piled against

the glass doors which open upon the balcony, to the height of four feet.

Leaving this apartment on the left, and the common apartments of the Empress on the right, we pass through a room of no grand appearance into her Majesty's throne-chamber. The throne itself resembles that of the Emperor, except that it is less, and only stands on a single step. A grand niche sustained by two colossal caryatides, contains a fine chimney piece of white marble, representing the nine Muses. The splendour of the furniture may be compared with that of the other chambers. I shall only mention a beautiful clock, representing Phœbus in his car drawn by two horses, and performing his diurnal course. The dial-plate is fixed in the wheel of the car, the whole is highly finished, and exhibits a master-piece of

art. The ceiling, painted by *Mengs*, represents the judgment of Paris, and is not ill done. Of the same description are the pictures by *Bessonoff*, a scholar of the Academy of Arts at Petersburg, which are placed over the doors, and represent Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture.

On one side of the throne-chamber is the gallery of Raphael, so called from four magnificent pieces of tapestry, which almost cover a wall of seventy-two feet in length. These are copies of four well-known pictures by Raphael in the Vatican. *Constantine haranguing his troops* on the day he gave battle to Maxentius. *Heliodorus driven out of the temple*, the famous *School of Athens*, and the no less famous *Parnassus*, in which Apollo plays on a modern violin. I refer the reader to M. Ramdohr's able description of these pictures, before even the copies of which I have passed many an hour in

silent admiration. A large ceiling-piece, and two small ones, painted by *Mettenleiter*, deserve attention; that in the middle represents the temple of Minerva, upon the steps of which the liberal arts are grouped; the Greek that represents architecture is a portrait of *Brenna*; and *Mettenleiter* has depicted himself in the allegorical figure that personates painting. The subjects of the two small ceilings are *Prometheus animating man*, and *Idleness and Industry*. This gallery is adorned likewise with fine bronzes, marble chimney-pieces, &c.

The gallery leads to an oblong saloon, in which are a very fine antique statue of *Bacchus*, and a modern statue, perhaps as fine, of *Diana*, executed by *Houdon*. The whole room is filled with busts, bass-reliefs, sarcophagi, antique vases, &c. of very different degrees of merit.

This saloon lies contiguous to the

guard-hall, where a detachment of horse always remained on duty. The room merely exhibits four Ionic columns, and a ceiling-piece by *Smuglewitsch*, in which Curtius leaps into the gulf in a very aukward manner.

We are now upon the grand staircase again, after having gone through the state chambers of the Emperor and Empress, to the right and to the left. On the 8th of November, 1800, his Imperial Majesty celebrated the inauguration of the palace with the greatest pomp. He dined for the first time in this edifice, and gave a grand masked ball to the public, during which all the apartments which I have described were thrown open, and lighted up with several thousand wax candles.

The reader will doubtless be curious to be acquainted with the rooms which the Emperor and Empress commonly

inhabited. From Raphael's gallery a door opened into the apartments of the monarch: an anti-chamber plainly painted, had no other ornament than seven pictures by *Charles Vanloo*, representing the legends of Saint Gregory.

The second room, inlaid with white and stripes of gold, was decorated with fine landscapes, and several views of the palace itself. The ceiling had a very striking effect; it was painted by *Tiepolo*, and represented Mark Antony and Cleopatra dissolving the pearl in vinegar. The ignorance of the painter has committed several ridiculous faults against costume.

In the third apartment the walls are almost entirely covered by six landscapes, painted by *Martinoff*, which exhibit views of the palaces of Gatschina and Pavlofsky. Six elegant mahogany vases, upon which are fixed twenty bron-

tiful vases of porphyry, oriental alabaster, &c. contain the Emperor's private library. This room was the post of his Majesty's body hussar. A back door leads from hence into a kitchen which supplies the table of the monarch, and in which he had designedly established a *German cook*, who always dressed his victuals. He had lately fitted up a similar kitchen near his own apartments at the *winter palace*. Where is the man, who with all these precautions, (perhaps very necessary ones) could envy the condition of the most powerful monarch upon earth?

Another private door opens into a small room intended for the body-hussars, and which, communicating with a winding stair-case, since become very celebrated, leads into the court, through a door guarded by a single centinel.

From the library we pass immediately into the Emperor's bed-chamber, in which likewise he chiefly remained during the day, and in which he died. The room is very large, being, if I mistake not, between thirty and forty feet square. The walls are wainscotted in white, and were hung with a great number of landscapes, the greater part by *Vernet*, some by *Wouvermann*, and *Vander Meulen*. In the middle of the chamber, behind a screen, stood a small camp bed without curtains. Over the bed was an angel, (not a guardian one) by *Guido Reni*. In one corner hung the portrait of an ancient knight banneret, painted by *Jean le Duc*, which the Emperor greatly valued.

A bad picture of Frederick II. on horseback, and a well-known plaister-figure of that monarch, placed in a corner upon a marble pedestal, formed a

strange contrast with these magnificent pictures.

The Emperor's writing table was remarkable in more than one respect. It was fixed upon four ivory pillars of the Ionic order, with bronze bases, and capitals. An ivory edge of fine workmanship, ornamented with small vases of the same, was fixed to it. Two chandeliers with ivory branches inserted in blocks of amber, displayed four paste medallions, in the manner of Leberecht, representing the Emperor, the Empress, the two Grand Dukes and the Grand Duchess Elizabeth. The table and the candlesticks were the work of the Empress; that princess, who patronizes the arts and cultivates them with success, turned the ivory with her own hands and formed the pastes.

On one of the walls hung pictures

representing all the different regimentals of the Russian army.

A report has been a thousand times repeated, that the Emperor had a trap-door in his bed-room, together with several private doors: I am, however, enabled to declare and maintain the falsity of such assertion. The magnificent carpet that covered the floor rendered the very existence of such a door impossible; neither did the stove stand upon feet, and consequently there was no hollow place under it, as has been likewise pretended. There were indeed two concealed doors in the room, but one of them led to a corner that served for a well-known use, and the other shut up a recess in which the swords of such officers as were under arrest were deposited. The folding doors between the Emperor's chamber and the apart-

ments of the Empress remained shut and bolted on both sides.

The passage from the bed-chamber to the library was furnished with double doors, and on account of the great thickness of the walls, there was space enough between them for the construction of two private ones; in fact there were two: that on the right, shut up a dark closet where the imperial colours were kept; and that on the left opened upon a back stair-case which led to the Emperor's apartments on the ground floor.

Contiguous to this stair-case we enter a large wainscotted chamber, in one of the walls of which was fixed an old clock, made at Dresden by *Dinglinger*, in 1714. Three silver hands point out the hour, the temperature of the air, and the direction of the wind. This clock had formerly stood in the garden of Peter the Great.

From hence we step into a circular closet in which stood two Italian statues, a Vesta, and a woman sacrificing: besides these was a statue of Apollo, which was wrought at the Academy of Arts at Petersburg; and likewise a collection of fine vases of Séve-porcelaine, and a valuable table of *rossa antico*.

The next room, which is likewise wainscotted, contained an embroidered portrait of Peter the Great, of exquisite workmanship, several fine vases of Séve-manufactory, and some of the height of a man, made at the manufactory of Petersburg.

The last room, and in which the Emperor usually transacted business, was wainscotted with walnut tree, and bordered with varnished carved festoons. The compartments were ornamented with pagan divinities surrounded with garlands, on which various kinds of

birds were perched. The general effect of this room was soft and agreeable; the furniture was superb, particularly a chest of drawers, the work of the famous Rontgen, of Neuwied. A little monument that stood on a table, bearing this inscription—*Mary, the 21 April, 1791**, was probably the work of the Empress. A breakfast service of porcelain of the Petersburg manufactory, which stood in this room, and on which were painted several views of the palace of Michailoff, afforded new proof of the Prince's predilection for this work of his own creation.

The way to the Empress's apartments lay through the concert-room already described. A chamber of a gay and elegant appearance communicated with a state-room, the walls of which were

* The birth-day of Catherine II.

of grey Siberian marble, the compartments of lapis-lazuli and porphyry, the borders of variegated marble richly ornamented with gilded bronze. Antique busts were placed at proper distances round the walls, upon porphyry grounds; the pannels were of *breccia*. The chimney-piece was supported by alabaster columns; the frieze was of *verde antico*, &c. The furniture was suitably splendid: the sconce, which was of the finest crystal, cost twenty thousand rubles.

The Empress's dressing and working room lay contiguous to this state chamber. It was wainscotted, and the book-cases and chests of drawers were of the most beautiful mahogany. A golden toilet caught the attention in a less forcible degree than four fine original pictures in the same room, one of which was painted by *Marie Gerard*, the other

three by *Greuze*. One of the latter represents a young girl being scolded by her mother for giving herself so much up to love affairs as to suffer her bird to die for want of food. Diderot gives an ample description of this picture in his treatise on painting. A writing-table stood in the middle of the room, and bore marks of the noble and frequent use that had been made of it. The Empress, as I have been told, lately slept in this chamber on account of its being perfectly dry.

The last room is a *boudoir* or round closet, resplendent with magnificence. The walls were hung with light blue velvet richly embroidered with gold stripes; and every part of the chamber displayed the finest specimens of art, either in bronze, or in lapis-lazuli and other valuable stones. I was particularly struck with a large red porphyry

vase standing upon a pedestal of the same, intermixed with malachite; the whole was five feet in height. The floor was covered with a splendid French carpet.

This closet, which is situated in a corner of the palace, behind the bedrooms of the Emperor and the Empress, connected those two apartments together by a single wall, but of such thickness, that we are not surprised her Majesty was ignorant of the death of her husband for some time after the event.

Besides the Emperor and Empress, the Grand Duke, his consort, and a lady of honour, no one lodged on this story. In the chamber of the Grand Duchess Anne I remarked a time-piece which was inscribed with the following words: *Love reduced to reason.* The god appears in fetters, and Reason holds the end of the chain. In the presence of such a

beautiful and amiable princess, the punishment, however, did not seem at all severe. In her husband's apartment I saw a copy of the Borghesian hermaphrodite, and one of the Venus coming out of the bath in the Florentine gallery.

On the ground floor, there is nothing remarkable besides an unfinished theatre and the church. In the latter, the choir is supported by fourteen Ionic columns of Serdepol granite. The grand altar, which is of an octagonal form, is constructed of black and white marble. Three doors lead to it; that in the middle is of massy silver, in open work, and ornamented with six medallions, painted on copper, by Professor *Giovenco*. Over the door are silver rays of glory; and the whole altar is incrusted with lapis-lazuli and bronze. The altar-piece represents *the*

last supper, and was painted by *Akimoff*, one of the professors of the academy. On either side the middle door stands a magnificent Corinthian column of porphyry, with a bronze base and capital; the pedestal is incrusted with lapis-lazuli. Silver lamps are hung before various images, and in the middle of them appears a golden one set with brilliants. The further end of the edifice is terminated by a large picture, alas! by *Smuglevitsch*, representing the archangel Michael, the patron of the church, hurling the devils headlong into the dark abyss. The decorous artist, who was obliged to paint this group naked, has had recourse to a singular expedient in order to avoid giving the least offence to modesty. Every devil, as if by accident, covers either with his hands or feet such parts of the adjacent figures as the painter thought fit to

conceal; which, in fact, rather transgresses against than preserves decency. The ceiling of the cupola was painted by *Carlo Scoti*, and, happily for the artist, his work is almost defaced by the dampness of the situation. A gallery, containing four separate pews, was erected on each side of the altar for the use of the imperial family.

The rest of the ground-floor was occupied by the Grand Duke Alexander and his consort, the young Grand Duke Nicolas Pavlovitsch, Princess Gagarin, Count Narischkin, and Count Koteitzoff, the Emperor's favourite. I shall confine myself to the description of the Grand Duke's apartments, which, though less magnificent, were, in my opinion, more agreeable than those on the first story. At the same time, I cannot but remember with gratitude the polite and engaging behaviour of

every one about that prince's person. The goodness of the master had warmed the hearts of all his attendants, and every one of them spoke with enthusiasm of the noble pair they had the honour to serve.

The dressing-room of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth, now reigning Empress, was hung with rich Lyonese silk. Two fine Ionic columns of red and white Olonetz marble ornamented a niche, and sustained an entablature decorated with antique busts. On each side this recess stood a statue of Carrara marble; the one representing a woman under affliction supporting her head with her hands; the other, a young girl playing with a dove.

In the same room I remarked a table which was inlaid with different specimens of the marbles of the country, and a clock representing Bacchus sit-

ting astride a tun, on the head of which the dial-plate was fixed.

Contiguous to this chamber was a beautiful closet hung with looking-glasses. A recess, supported by two columns of French marble, contained the *divan* *, which, together with the rest of the furniture, was of uncut rose-coloured velvet, and had the appearance of being covered over with fine lace. It is not easy to describe the pleasing effect of the whole closet and its furniture. A desk filled with books and a piano-forte made by Longman and Broderip shewed that more than one muse had taken up her residence here.

The bed-chamber was singularly striking. The compartments of the walls

* A kind of sofa formed of mattrasses piled one upon another.

were half hung with purple velvet and half with gold stuff; they were connected together in a serpentine manner, and ran horizontally round the room. The bed was fitted up in the same style. The apartment contained several bronze and marble statues, and the whole had a magnificent effect without at all distracting or fatiguing the eye. The spot was, however, uninhabitable on account of its excessive dampness, and the Arch-Duchess had suffered considerably during the time she had occupied it. The wax-coloured paintings over the doors are entirely defaced.

This bed-chamber opened into the saloon of antiques, which contained about fifty statues, several busts, sarcophagi, and other ancient monuments. I shall only mention the principal.

1. A fine colossal bust of Juno, two feet five inches high, placed upon a sar-

cophagus ornamented with three bass-reliefs, and containing an inscription. The first represents the figure of a woman with a floating robe, holding something in her hands, which are lifted up. Two masks lie at her feet. The same subject is repeated on the other side. The third bass-relief represents Bacchus crowned with bunches of grapes, with the mystic basket, in which a dog is seated, placed near him: on the other side appears a serpent. The inscription runs thus:

P. SCANTIUS PI.
OLIMPUS
FECIT. SIBI. V. A. LXX SINE CRIMINE.
VITÆ ET SCANTIÆ ABELE CONLIBERT.
OPTIMA ÆDESE. BENE MERITÆ *.

* This may be read as follows: *Publius Scantius Pius Olimpus fecit sibi, volventi annum* LXX *sine crimine vitæ, et Scantiæ Aureliæ conliberlæ optimæ de se bene meritæ.*

2. A fine bust of a young Apollo with flowing locks.

3. A very fine Silenus about three feet high, holding in one hand a cup, and in the other bunches of grapes.

4. A triangular altar with bass-reliefs, one of which in particular is remarkable. It represents a man wearing a pointed crown. In one hand he holds a sword, in the other a human head. The other two represent a satyr with a cock and a basket of fruit, and a female bacchanalian.

5. A sarcophagus with goats heads and garlands of fruit, with two dead children lying upon a protuberant part. A swan is likewise represented on the point of taking its flight. The inscription is as follows :

D. M.
M. MUTIUS. M. L. AURILIUS
AGITATOR.
FAC. CARAMANTINIC.
VIXIT ANN. XXXV.
AGITAVIT ANN. XII.*

6. A round pedestal, which probably supported a funeral urn. It is encircled with a very prominent bass-relief finely executed, and in high preservation. The subject is a wild-boar hunt. On one side is seen the animal, and at his feet a dying man; behind him are two hunters in mantles: on the other side appear a naked youth in a helmet, and a dog near him; and behind him the figures of two men. Aulic Counsellor

* It may be read in this manner: *Diis Manibus, Marcus Mutius Marci Libertus Aurelius, Agitator factionis Garamantinicæ, vixit annos* XXXV. *agitavit annos* XII.

Kohler takes the latter for Castor and Pollux; or the whole for an allusion to the dead person, which seems the more natural of the two. The young man perhaps is represented, on one side, gaily setting out with two of his friends to the chase, and on the other, overthrown and killed by a wild boar. The inscription, which begins with these words D. M. CORNELI... has been mislaid among my papers: all I recollect is, that it contained no reference to a hunt.

7. A very fine bust of Achilles, which was procured from Greece; it is three feet high, and wrought in Parian marble.

8. A Bacchus three feet two inches in height, of exquisite workmanship. In one hand he holds a bunch of grapes, in the other a cup. His shoulders are covered with a goat skin and crowned with ivy. Upon the *cippus*, which

stands in the stead of a pedestal, we read the following words:

D. M.
ANTISTIÆ.
TERSIPIDI.
V. A. XX D. V.
ANTISTIA. APATE.
SOROR. GEMELLA.
FECIT PIENTISSIMÆ.

9. A muse in meditation leaning against a rock. This figure is three feet nine inches high: the drapery is exceedingly well executed.

10. A fine torso of Hercules, three feet two inches long.

11. A double bust of the Indian bearded Apollo and Ariadne.

12. A graceful bust of Marcus Aurelius.

Such are the pieces which particularly interest the antiquarian.

The amateur of painting will also find ample gratification in this saloon, and will be peculiarly struck with eight large landscapes by *Chedrin*, containing views of Pawlowsky, Gatschina, and Peterhoff; and likewise with two ceilings painted by *J. P. Scoti*, which represent Cephalus and Procris, and Venus rising from the sea.

The apartments of the Grand Duke (the present Emperor) were small, and less remarkable for the sumptuousness of their furniture, than for some original pictures of great value. Of these I shall only mention Achilles discovered by Ulysses among the women, the work of *Angelica Kauffmann*; a woman weeping over a dead body, with an angel at her side pointing to heaven, by *Carlo Maratti*; a Juno and a Diana, by *Pesca*.

These apartments are contiguous to a

fine bath, which Count Narischkin had fitted up with much taste for the Grand Duchess. The walls and ceiling are hung with muslin upon a rose-coloured ground, and the floor was overspread with white cloth. There was a fountain that played on turning a cock. A canopy was suspended over the bath, from whence sweet-scented waters distilled at the pleasure of the bather. Other pipes introduced warm water. One of the walls was covered with a vast looking-glass, and in the shade of a recess, a Turkish sofa invited to repose.

This pretty cabinet communicated with a vapour-bath. I know not, however, if the beautiful and delicate Grand Duchess (a German by birth) was accustomed to this Russian usage; for my own part, I think these kind of stoves detestable things, and I could never pre-

vail on myself to pass over the threshold of any of them.

Besides his lodging rooms, the Grand Duke had several state apartments, and a superb hall divided in two by an arcade supported by Ionic columns of white marble: the hall was decorated with several valuable original pictures, among which was one painted by Reubens, representing a fawn embraced by a female bacchanalian. At one end of the apartment, a second arcade is constructed upon four Ionic columns, between which stood two magnificent statues of a fawn and a bacchanalian, by *Cavaceppi.*

Through this hall we arrive at the throne or audience chamber of the Grand Duke, the walls of which were hung with purple velvet embroidered with silver. The prince gave his audiences under a canopy, but not seated,

and the carpet on which he stood was not raised above the level of the floor.

The second story of the palace was inhabited by the Grand Duchesses Mary and Catherine, with the Counteſs de Liewen their governess. Their apartments were less superb than those which have been described, but were nevertheless extremely elegant.

In the area stood another guard-house, containing a company of the body guards. The report that the number of such guards about the palace was small, is destitute of all foundation, though it was generally believed, and has been every where propagated. The back parts of the edifice form a mere labyrinth of dark staircases and gloomy corridors, in which lamps are continually burning day and night. For two or three weeks, I stood in need of a

guide to lead me through these intricate turnings and windings.

Nothing could have been more detrimental to health than a residence in this palace. In every part, the destructive effects of humidity were to be observed; and even in the apartment which contained the great historical pictures, I have seen ice an inch thick in each corner, from the roof to the floor, notwithstanding the continual fires that were kept up in the two chimneys. The wainscotting of the Emperor and Empress's apartments had in some degree counteracted the bad effects of cold and moisture; but all who occupied the other rooms of the palace were materially affected in their health. The palace was likewise extremely inconvenient to all who had business to transact therein. It was continually necessary to run across the peristyle, along

corridors exposed to the air, or over the open court. Few even of the higher orders were allowed to alight at the grand staircase: almost every person was obliged to stop at a low door, and wander up and down the back staircases, till they found the place they were in quest of.

The Emperor, however, was so captivated with this production of his own fancy, that the most delicate censure irritated as much as the coarsest panegyric pleased him. One day he met an elderly lady on the staircase:—"These stairs," said she, "have been represented to me as inconvenient; but I find they are extremely pleasant." His Majesty was so delighted with this praise, that he kissed the old lady. All the courtiers knew how to turn this disposition to their own advantage. Their praises never ceased; and I am well informed, that when every expression of

praise, exclamation, and admiration, were exhausted, some have fallen upon their knees before the bronze statues, and worshipped them in silent extacy.

Had I obeyed the repeated injunctions of the Emperor to omit no trifle in my description, I should have filled a large volume, and have wearied both the reader and myself. Some weeks before his death, I presented his Majesty with a specimen of my labours; of which he was pleased to express his satisfaction.

There are many palaces in the world that contain a greater number of scarce and valuable articles, but not one which has been erected, furnished, and inhabited within so short a period as that of Michailoff, which was completed in less than four years. A magnificent service of gold, and another of china, ornamented with views of the palace, were not finished.

A few weeks after the Emperor's death, all the valuable articles that were moveable, were removed from this palace, and placed in others, to preserve them from the effects of humidity. At present it is uninhabited, and resembles a mausoleum.

On the 11th of March, at one o'clock, and consequently about twelve hours before his death, I saw the Emperor Paul for the last time. I met him on the state staircase close to the statue of Cleopatra. He stopped, as usual, and spoke to me. The subject of our conversation was the statue before us. He called it a fine copy; examined the different kinds of marble that composed the pedestal, and asked me the names of them: then touching upon the history

of the Egyptian Queen, he expressed his admiration of her heroic death. He seemed by a smile to approve of a remark I made, that she would not have destroyed herself had Augustus yielded to the force of her charms. He then asked me if my description of the palace was in much forwardness. I replied, that it was almost finished; and he left me after having observed, with great condescension, that he was happy to hear it.

My eyes followed him as he ascended the steps: when he arrived at the top, he turned towards the place where I was standing; neither of us then entertained the least suspicion that we had seen each other for the last time. This interview made a strong impression upon my mind, and I have more than once since the Emperor's death, indulged a melancholy contemplation of the statue of Cleopatra.

On the 12th of March, early in the morning, the accession of the young Emperor to the throne was announced. By eight o'clock the principal nobility had already paid him their homage in the chapel of the Winter Palace. The people gave themselves up to joy, and to the free indulgence of those hopes, which the well known merits of the young Monarch so naturally inspired.

The first measures adopted by Alexander, his proclamation, the first orders he issued, all tended to encourage and confirm the confidence with which his subjects beheld him ascend the throne of his forefathers. He solemnly promised to tread in the steps of Catherine II. of glorious memory; he allowed every one to dress according to his own fancy; exonerated the inhabitants of the capital from the troublesome duty of alighting from their carriages at the ap-

proach of any of the Imperial family; dismissed the Court-Advocate, who was universally and justly detested; suppressed the Secret Inquisition, that had become the scourge of the country; restored to the Senate its former authority; and set at liberty the state prisoners in the fortress. What a spectacle to see these unfortunate people released from captivity, mute with surprise at their delivery, taking their happiness for a dream, and with trembling steps seeking their respective homes!

I saw an old Colonel of the Cossacks and his son brought from the fortress to Count de Pahlen's apartments. The story of this generous youth is extremely interesting. His father had been dragged, for I know not what offence, from Tscherkask to Petersburg, and there closely imprisoned. Soon afterwards his son arrived, a handsome and brave

young man, who had obtained in the reign of Catherine II. the cross of St. George, and that of Wolodimer. For a long while he exerted himself to procure his father's enlargement by solicitations and petitions; but perceiving no hopes of success, he requested, as a particular favour, to be allowed to share his captivity and misfortunes. This was in part granted him; he was committed a prisoner to the fortress; but was not permitted to see his father; nor was the unfortunate old man even informed that his son was so near him. On a sudden the prison bolts were drawn, the doors were opened, his son rushed into his arms; and he not only learnt that he was at liberty, but at the same time was informed of the noble sacrifice which filial piety had offered. He alone can decide which information gave him most delight. I saw him several

mornings together in Count de Pahlen's audience chamber; he still wore his long beard, reaching down to his waist. He commonly sat in the recess of a window, with down-cast eyes, and without paying the least attention to the bustle of the surrounding scene. His son, whose noble countenance shone more resplendent from the consciousness of his own heroism, than did his breast decorated by the two orders which he wore, walked about the room and conversed with his acquaintances.

The audience-chamber was indeed a rich field of observation to a looker-on at all conversant with the human heart; and though I had no particular business there, I continued to pass several hours on the spot every morning; nor did I ever leave the groups that surrounded me, without having added to my stock of this species of knowledge. By way

of contrast to the affecting scene I have just related, I shall give the reader an anecdote of a livelier cast: It happened, I think, the day after the Emperor's death. The room was extremely full; there were probably some hundreds present: I was warming myself at a stove, when suddenly there was a great murmur, and the company, one after another, all rushed to the windows, and kept looking into the street as if something very wonderful had happened. Curiosity, at length, drew me from the stove; it was with difficulty I could share the interesting spectacle. At length I got through the crowd, and what was the mighty affair? Why truly *the first round hat that had passed by.* This round hat appeared to make more impression upon the minds of the company, than even the liberation of the state prisoners had done: nothing was

to be seen but chearful laughing countenances. Such creatures are men!

I have long wished to inform the reader, that the first days of the reign of *Alexander the Clement*, afforded me the most delicious enjoyments. In the course of this narrative, I have often been drawn into many heart-rending recollections. I now come to one that overwhelms me with delight. The Senate, by command of the young Monarch, printed and distributed three separate lists of the names of the exiles recalled from Siberia. No sooner had I heard of this, than I dispatched my servant to procure a copy. My eye ran over it in haste, till dimmed with tears of joy, it fell upon the name of Sokoloff. Yes! he obtained his liberty; and, at the moment in which I am writing this, is restored to his wife and children! May he, like me, have found them all well!

and of his long and painful dream, may nothing remain but the recollection of the companion of his misfortune, and the sentiment of friendship which united us under our common afflictions.

M. de Kiniäkoff and his brothers, M. Beecher of Moscow, and many more of my acquaintances, were included in the same list. The most remarkable case of all was that of M. S——, a clergyman. He had fallen into the infernal snares of M. Tumanski,* the atrocious Censor of Riga. Although M. S—— probably intends to publish his story, I think myself warranted to re-

* The reader must not confound his name with that of a distant relation of his, M. Tumanski, Counsellor of State, and head of the censorship at Petersburg, a person who never caused any one to be unhappy, and who has the reputation of being a well informed polite man.

late it to the reader, as I have the particulars from very good authority.

M. S——, minister of a parish in the neighbourhood of Dopart, had collected a small library for the use of his flock. Tumanski having been made Counsellor of the Province, and being desirous of giving proofs of his vigilance and zeal, applied to M. S—— for a catalogue of his books. The pastor, intimidated by *the complexion of the times*, replied, that he had discontinued the reading society, and such was in fact his intention. It was, however, necessary to collect the various books that were in circulation, which, within a few, he had been able to effect. Among that number was a small volume written by Augustus Lafontaine, and entitled *The Power of Love*. Not recollecting to whom he had lent the book, and still unwilling to lose it, he had recourse to the

usual way of advertisement, and inserted in the Dopart Gazette a request, that the person who had this volume in his possession, which made part of *the circulating library*, would have the goodness to return it.

The advertisement unhappily fell into the hands of M. Tumanski. It is, however, confidently asserted, that the intentions of that wretch were less inimical to M. S——, than to M. de Nagel, the worthy Governor of Livonia, to whom he bore a secret enmity, on account of some pretended offence. He reported the business to his friend and patron, Obuljaninoff, with the addition of many aggravating circumstances. The latter communicated it to the Emperor, with further aggravations. In a word, the clergyman was accused of having continued his circulating library in spite of the warning

given by the Censor; and of endeavouring to propagate dangerous principles among his readers, by furnishing them with *prohibited jacobinical books*, while in fact no catalogue of forbidden books at all existed. This conduct was represented to the Prince in such a false and odious point of view, that he gave orders that the minister should be immediately arrested and brought to Petersburg; M. Tumanski having previously surrounded his house with a detachment of soldiers, and caused all his books to be publicly burned.

When Tumanski set out to execute his agreeable commission, the whole city of Riga interceded in behalf of this unfortunate family, and conjured him to do every thing in his power to save them from ruin. He promised this; but, as it may be well supposed, took care not to keep his word. In the dead of

the night, the troops under the command of the noble Censor beset the parsonage-house, while the peaceful inhabitants were fast asleep. What must their surprise have been on waking? every avenue was stopped up, an inventory was instantly taken of the good man's papers, and seals put upon them; all the books, the bible not excepted, were piled in a heap and committed to the flames. The unhappy minister himself was hurried into a kibick, and conducted by an officer of the police to Petersburg.

Towards day-break, when he had recovered a little from his first astonishment, he requested his guard to allow him to write a few lines to his wife. The perfidious man pretended to yield to his entreaties, and even undertook to put the letter into the post-office; he detained it, however, and on his arrival in the capital, delivered it into the hands

of the Court-Advocate. The letter contained, besides some very natural complaints, a request, that his wife *would quiet the minds of his parishioners till his return*; from which it was inferred, that he had already incited the peasants to revolt, and that they only waited the return of their ringleader to rise up in arms. Others say, he had requested his wife to burn some letters of a friend of his, with whom he had formerly corresponded, and which contained some remarks upon the French revolution; and that a chasseur had really been sent to arrest this friend, who, very happily for himself, had been dead several years.

Whatever it might have been, the whole matter was represented in such black colours by the Court-Advocate, that the Prince instantly ordered the tribunal to condemn M. S—— to corporal punishment, and afterwards to

be sent to the mines of Siberia. The judges were under no small embarrassment in consequence of this injunction. The sentence, which in the natural order of things ought to result from examination and evidence, was prescribed to them before-hand, and they felt themselves reduced to the situation of executive agents. The President ventured to remonstrate to the Court-Advocate on this point, who coldly replied, that the Judges might incur what hazard they pleased; but that for his part, he knew the will of the Emperor.

The unfortunate minister, then in the fortress, was one morning ordered instantly to put on his robes, and accompany M. de Marakoff to the public tribunal, in order to hear his sentence pronounced.

Full of hope, and the more so, as he had been directed to appear in his sacer-

dotal habit, he set out to meet his fate. When he arrived in court he was placed with his back against the wall, and the Secretary began to read his sentence. When the Secretary came to these words, "The minister S—— shall be deprived of his benefice, stripped of his gown and band, receive twenty strokes of the knout, and be sent in irons to the mines of Nertschinsk, to work there for life," the unhappy man seemed lost in despair; and after a convulsive motion of the head, he fell flat upon the ground. Proper assistance being afforded him, he recovered the use of his senses, and falling upon his knees, he implored the judges to condescend to hear him.

"This is not the place," replied the Court-Advocate. "*Where then?*" cried the wretched man, in a resolute tone of voice, "*Where? there! above, in heaven!*"

He was now dragged to the common prison. All Petersburg took an interest in his fate; every one interceded in his behalf; even the Russian clergy, to their great honour, among the rest. Count de Pahlen won the hearts of the public by his generous exertions to save him. But every effort was in vain! Obuljaninoff had laid too fast hold on his victim. S—— was led to the place where the punishment of the knout is administered; and when he had proceeded halfway there, he was ordered back to receive the sacrament at the hands of M. Reinbolt. After this he set out again to the place of torment.

Already were his hands tied to the posts, already were his shoulders bared to undergo the horrid punishment, when an officer arrived, and having whispered a word in the executioner's ear, the latter respectfully replied, *sluschu*,

(I understand you) and then brandished the knout twenty different times over the prisoner, without touching his body, very adroitly applying every stroke upon his clothes only. Hence it is manifest, that some humane personage, who had not been able to screen this innocent man from ignominy, had at least exerted his authority so far as to prevent his suffering the horrid torture to which he had been condemned.

M. S—— was led back to prison. Count de Pahlen, under various pretences, retarded his departure for the mines; and had several sharp altercations with the Court-Advocate on the subject. The Emperor, however, strenously insisting that the sentence should be duly executed, the Count was at length obliged to give way, and the unfortunate M. S—— dragged his fetters, step by step, as far as Nertschinsk. His

wife, who was determined to share his fate, could not obtain permission to accompany him.

This unfortunate man is now free. When I left Petersburg he was daily expected there; and doubtless the young Emperor will restore him to honour and fortune.

Some days after the death of Paul I. Prince Saboff gave a splendid tavern-dinner to a hundred of his friends, at twenty-five rubles a-head, exclusive of wine. The company drank between thirty and forty dozen of champaign, at five rubles a bottle. I should not have mentioned this *princely feast*, but for the purpose of recording a *princely act*. In the height of their jollity, the company recollected the case of the unhappy M. S——, and immediately opened a subscription in his favour, which, it is said, produced him ten thousand rubles.

It is the opinion of many lawyers, that the order intimated to the court of justice, to inflict corporal punishment on M. S——, did not oblige the judges to condemn him to the knout, the most severe of all punishments.

The reader will not be displeased to learn, that M. Tumanski, who had been for so many years the scourge of Riga, has ended his career in the most wretched manner. Enraged at the contempt with which he was generally treated, he at last meditated the ruin of the whole town; and with that view denounced the inhabitants to the Emperor as arrant Jacobins, sending a long list of names, among which were those of the principal people, and men in office, with the venerable Governor M. de Nagel at their head.

The upright and clear-sighted Monarch having read this libel, declared,

with too much benevolence perhaps, that Tumanski was out of his senses, and immediately dismissed him from his employment. On my return through Riga, in the month of June last, he was living there, poor and despised, on the bounty of the very inhabitants whom he had devoted to ruin. In this manner has leaden-heeled Justice, as the poet calls her, overtaken the guilty, and condemned him to condign punishment; a punishment indeed much too gentle, when compared with the innumerable afflictions which his administration had brought upon so many unfortunate people.

Madame Chevalier and her husband, who had figured, though in another way, in the late reign, likewise experienced the clemency of the young Monarch, who contented himself with merely sending them out of the country. M.

Chevalier, who had acted a part no less public than dishonourable, and who has since endeavoured, through the medium of the French newspapers, to persuade the world of his innocence, challenges a scrutiny of his conduct, and without touching on his private life, I shall endeavour to shew in what manner he and his wife conducted themselves to the world.

Madame Chevalier was born at Lyons; her father, who was a dancing-master, died young, and left his family in indigent circumstances. M. Chevalier became acquainted with her in this situation, and married her. He is himself one of the most arrogant of men, and the worst *ballet*-master that ever existed, although he has often boasted of having danced a *pas de cinq* at the Opera-house, with Vestris, Gardel, &c. One day, as he was relating this gasco-

nade, a man of wit who had known him at Paris, where he was engaged as a mere figurante, observed aloud; "I think M. Chevalier very modest; he speaks of a *pas de cinq* only, whereas I have seen him dance a *pas de seize*."—I know not if he was in fact a figurante; some say he was second *ballet*-master at the Italian theatre; this, however, is of no consequence. But I can affirm with great truth, that his ballets have ever appeared to me to be the most wretched I have ever seen. He always strove to hide the penury of his genius by the introduction of grand marches, and the splendid decorations which Gonzaga, a very eminent artist, afforded him; as well as with the assistance of the most superb dresses. His *ballets* were extremely expensive, though they were seldom repeated more than twice. He was likewise indulged with the privi-

lege, that none of his decorations, nor any article of his wardrobe, should ever be used except in his own *ballets*. The German company has often felt the inconvenience of this privilege; for whenever we had occasion for a foreign dress, and sent for it to the keeper of the wardrobe, the answer constantly returned us was, that the dresses belonged to M. Chevalier. I must, however, confess, that the hatred the French theatre bore the German one, has often suggested this pretext in order to cover a refusal. One Sunday, I remember, I found myself under the necessity of changing the piece I intended to have given (which was Octavia) for another, a little before the curtain drew up, because I could not obtain a few miserable dresses for the Roman soldiers, although my request had been backed by a note from the great Marshal of the Court.

I mention this as one of the thousand unpleasant circumstances which I had to encounter in the management of the theatre.

I now return to M. Chevalier. It is well known that he left Hamburg, and arrived, with his wife, at Petersburg, where, by means of her personal charms, for she is very handsome, she soon acquired connections of the most distinguished kind. To these connections her husband owed his office of assessor, and the victory he gained over old *Le Picq*, a *ballet*-master of distinguished merit.

Had he remained satisfied with this advantage, had he continued to reign within his own sphere, and had not made such display of his foolish self-love, the public would have been content with laughing at him, and I should not have mentioned his name. In spite of his protestations of innocence and probity,

it is clearly proved, that he has bartered his real or pretended influence for immense sums of money. I am acquainted with several instances of this sort. I am averse to expose any person, but *in case of necessity*, I can *prove* what *I advance*; and I think it incumbent on me to make such declaration, lest I should be supposed to have attacked the reputation of an honest man wantonly, or merely upon report.

The most shocking transaction of this kind, and which is notorious all over Petersburg, is the very one M. Chevalier asserts, in the *Journal de Paris*, to be a mere fabrication. The fact is, that he has had art enough to take advantage of an accessary incident which had been erroneously stated, in order to break out into a general complaint of calumny and injustice. I am not now speaking of a *divorce*, respecting which, M. Che-

valier may, if he pleases, call heaven and earth to attest his innocence, but of a fraudulent and atrocious act, and therefore the particulars shall be related.

Madame de ——, of one of the first families in the Russian empire, bequeath-her fortune, which consisted of thirteen thousand peasants, to the amiable Count de R—. She had taken care to make previous arrangements with her husband's family, and consequently disposed of her dowry only. Catherine had confirmed the will; notwithstanding which, its validity was contested in the reign of Paul I, and annulled by an order of the Cabinet.

M. ———, upon the strength of this case, was desirous of attaining similar ends, and for which purpose he availed himself of the assistance of a Piedmontese (an honest man, and known as such), whose name I do not recollect,

and commissioned him to make application to M. Chevalier. A negociation was entered upon accordingly, and a magnificent necklace was promised to Madame Chevalier, and a sum of money to her husband, which is said to be so great, that for fear of committing a mistake, I shall not mention it. The necklace was deposited by way of earnest, and likewise one-half the stipulated sum. The affair was proposed to the Emperor, who, considering it unjust, set his face against it, and refused his consent. The ill success of the application was industriously concealed from the Piedemontese; however, he at last obtained information of it, and having demanded the restitution of the presents, he was answered with sarcasms, and menaced with mischief.

Driven quite to desperation, he applied to Madame de *Bonvel*, a French

lady, whose mysterious appearance at Petersburg was an enigma to every one, and who, having gained the protection of several great people, was tolerated by the Emperor, not only in the capital, but even at Gatschina. She was taken, with probability enough, for an agent of the French Government.

This woman instantly espoused the cause of the Piedemontese, and related his story to Count Rostopschen, minister of state, who being at that time at enmity with Madame Chevalier's *friend*, laid the whole transaction before the Emperor. Some say his Majesty was informed of the affair by an intercepted letter; however that may be, it is certain the Emperor received the information through Count Rostopschen.

The Monarch, who was naturally just, was thrown into a violent passion, and threatened to make a terrible ex-

ample of the Chevalier. The only step they had now to take, was to deny the fact. "Is it our fault," said they, "if offers of money are made us? It is enough that we never received any." At the same time they loudly demanded that the calumniator should suffer exemplary punishment. The wretched Piedmontese was arrested by order of the expeditious Court-advocate, and, all of a sudden, he was discovered to be a violent Jacobin, though he had been hitherto well known as a zealous royalist. He received the knout, had his nostrils split, and was sent to the mines of Siberia. This anecdote I have received from an impartial person of strict veracity, who had it from the first source. All Petersburg is well acquainted with the atrocious arts with which the justice of the Monarch had been in so monstrous a manner surprised and im-

posed upon. I may possibly be mistaken in some trifling particulars, but the story itself is strictly true. Let M. Chevalier explain, if he can, how he has been able, since that time, to enjoy one hour of undisturbed repose!

The luxury he displayed in his house was disgusting in the highest degree. His rooms vied in splendour with those of the palace of Michäeloff. One of them was hung with rose-colour silk, covered with fine flowered muslin, and seemed to be the very temple of voluptuousness. The family had a salary of more than thirteen thousand rubles, including Monsieur Augustus, the lady's brother, a very indifferent dancer. Besides this salary, the brother and sister had benefit nights, which produced upwards of twenty thousand rubles; for every one was eager to recommend themselves to this powerful family. I have

known tradesmen who have sent twenty-five rubles for seats, the usual price of which was one ruble and a half, and to whom their money had been returned with the most scornful disdain.—Every person who was already well received at Court, every one who wished to continue so, made sacrifices on these occasions frequently beyond their means, fully persuaded, that the idols to whom they thus bowed, might one day reimburse them, and that a sum which did not answer their expectations never escaped either their notice or their vengeance.

Madame Chevalier, indeed, had no occasion to use solicitations to fill the theatre on her benefit night. Her house was beset for places in the first boxes, and every one shewed their attachment by paying for them in coin. But Monsieur Augustus was often obliged to

take measures, of which no man of honour could avail himself. He wrote notes, or rather (as he could not write, a circumstance I learnt from ocular demonstration) had them written, to the rich and great, to force tickets upon them.

By such and a thousand other well-known practices, the family of the Chevaliers, it may be easily supposed, amassed great wealth. Lest I should be accused of exaggeration, I shall not venture to mention the value of the lady's jewels, nor the sums which her husband had, at different times, sent out of the country. M. L**o, the banker, who transacted his business, can give further information on this head; and, in fact, the whole town expected to see him compelled to make such declaration before the lady could have obtained permission to quit the country. The law

obliges foreigners to pay the Crown one-tenth part of the property they take out of the country, whatever the amount may be; and in the present case the defalcation might perhaps have amounted to some hundred thousand rubles. The generosity and clemency of the young Monarch, however, overlooked this circumstance. It is likewise well known that he ordered Count de Pahlen to inform Madame Chevalier, in a very polite letter, that she had leave to depart; and she took care not to stay to hear the intimation repeated.

The late Emperor, a few weeks before this event, had charged M. Chevalier with the honourable commission of engaging a party of comedians at Paris. For this purpose he had received upwards of twenty thousand rubles in money, and bills of exchange for as much more. During his whole journey,

he rendered himself remarkable by his insolence and rudeness; and the post-masters at the different stages still remember his insolent behaviour: the newspapers also recorded, that M. Chevalier, Counsellor of the College, and Knight of the Order of Malta, passed through such and such a town, &c. &c. I know not, indeed, whether he had the effrontery to assume these titles, but it would not have been at all unlike him.

It is owing to her husband, perhaps, that Madame Chevalier has acquired the reputation of being avaricious, which so ill accords with the softness and amenity of her personal appearance. Of her avarice many instances are nevertheless reported. The most shocking of all of them is the manner in which she has lately treated her aged mother, who lives at Lyons in the greatest indigence. The poor helpless woman wrote

several letters to her in order to solicit relief, but she could never obtain any answer. At last, a stranger arrived at Petersburg, who, having been eye-witness to her distress, had promised to represent her situation to her daughter. He called several times on Madame Chevalier, but was never admitted to her presence. Being, however, in no want of her interest, he grew impatient, and at last sent the lady word that he had a message to deliver from her mother, and that if she wished to be informed of it, she must have the goodness to send some one to him. She sent—but whom?—a servant! The stranger, provoked and ashamed at this unworthy conduct, refused to explain himself to a valet. Monsieur Augustus was then dispatched as Plenipotentiary from his sister. The stranger drew the most affecting picture of his mother's distress,

and Madame Chevalier sent him *two hundred rubles, in bank notes,* which he was, at his discretion, to supply her parent with. Two hundred rubles! The fiftieth part of what she has often received for a single box at her benefit! Madame Chevalier, who with a word could have caused her aged mother to have been brought in triumph to Petersburg, and supported there in ease and abundance; who reckoned her fortune by hundred thousands of rubles, sent her indigent parent *two hundred rubles.* For the sake of this lady, I sincerely hope she may be able to refute this anecdote; but hitherto, I am sorry to say, I have not had the least reason to doubt its truth.

Madame Chevalier has been handsome, and may still be considered so, though she is more than thirty, and is grown rather *en bon point.* She is a

charming singer, and as an actress peculiarly happy in artless and comic parts. Her smiling looks captivate the audience the moment she appears on the stage, and secures their approbation of her performance. She has sometimes ventured to appear in tragedy; but, in my opinion, she is in that line below mediocrity. In the part of Iphigenia, in which she so much delighted the Emperor, the actress was never, for one single moment, forgotten in the daughter of Agamemnon; it was still Madame Chevalier that figured on the boards; though, according to a copy of verses which were handed about Petersburg, Racine was placed at her feet; and the Muses and the Graces, in comparison with her, were represented as mere barrow-women.

How superior to this lady is Madame de Valville, the first tragic actress on the

Petersburg stage! Her person is agreeable, her declamation and action perfect. Nor is she a great actress only; she is likewise an amiable and virtuous woman; and the dignity with which she endured the many insults to which she was continually exposed, entitles her to the highest veneration. She is at the same time, the most tender of mothers, the best of wives, and the sincerest of friends. I entreat her pardon for this elogium, and beg she will impute it to a zeal, which at this moment triumphs over the fear of raising a blush on her cheek; on that cheek which has not yet forgot to blush!

Madame Chevalier was roused from her splendid dream, in a manner not the most agreeable to her. Two officers entered her house in the dead of the night, and insisted on speaking with her immediately. The saucy chamber-

maid, who had been long accustomed to see her mistress treated like a goddess, and to consider herself as a person of some importance, would fain have dismissed them with rudeness. The officers, however, despising her threats and outcries, rushed into Madame Chevalier's room, and appeared without any ceremony at her bedside. She started from her slumbers, and assured them her husband was at Paris! "It is not for him, Madam, we are looking," was their reply. Having learnt, in a few words, the events which had taken place, she was obliged to rise that very moment, and to listen to some railleries not of the most delicate nature.

I shall not enlarge upon the business of these officers, their visit was short, nor was Monsieur Augustus at all disturbed by them. What the lady felt during the rest of the night, and her

alarming prospect of the future, have perhaps, in some degree, avenged the multitude whom she had made unhappy, and the innocent whom she had ruined. Yet, in fact, she had nothing to dread. The delicacy of the young Monarch generously spared her. To considerations of a respectable nature she was indebted for that, which she could neither have ventured to hope, or to solicit: she was allowed to leave Petersburg without any kind of molestation. I saw her at Koningsberg and at Berlin, more brilliant and more lively than ever; and no sensations except those of *ennui*, appeared to give her the least uneasiness.

I dout not but that Monsieur Chevalier, with his accustomed impudence, will venture to dény the facts I have stated, the greater part of which relate chiefly to himself. He may endeavour to bring

my veracity and impartiality into question; but I here solemnly declare, that I have *personally* no subject of complaint either against him or his wife, and that I only partake of the general indignation of the public. I further declare, that I could have brought forward four times as many instances as I have given, had I been inclined to give ear to common report; and that I have designedly made choice of such as have been communicated to me by eye-witnesses of unexceptionable veracity. I have dispassionately administered the punishment of that notoriety, which sooner or later brands the forehead of the successful miscreant. But enough has already been said on the subject of these people.

The death of the Emperor again opened to me a happy prospect of returning to my own country; and as soon as I could venture to call the at-

tention of the young Monarch from the important concerns of the empire, to a subject of such small moment as my own private affairs, I took an opportunity of soliciting my discharge. On the 30th of March I presented a memorial to that effect, to Prince Suboff, the Emperor's Adjutant General. The 2d of April I received, through his hands, the flattering answer, that his Majesty wished me to continue in his service. Such distinguished goodness must naturally have rendered the resolution of persisting in my resignation extremely painful to me. Impressed with the warmest gratitude, I therefore declared, that I should be happy to remain in the service of a Prince so justly beloved; but that I was no longer able to superintend the German playhouse in its present situation; that if it pleased the Emperor to allow some reforms to take

place, to render it *really*, and not *nominally* a court-theatre, and placed in every respect upon a level with the French company, I would with pleasure exert all my efforts to render it worthy of his Majesty's approbation.

I received an order in consequence to draw up a memorial, in which I was directed to point out the means of reforming the German theatre. I instantly obeyed, and my plan, which it has pleased an ignorant and malevolent correspondent of the Hamburgh Gazette to call *gigantic*, was nevertheless calculated according to the rules of the strictest economy.

While the French theatre cost upwards of one hundred thousand rubles a year in salaries only, I undertook to support a company, that should rival it in every respect, for sixty thousand. It seems that the author of this paragraph

is no friend to the Germans, or he would not have termed gigantic a sum I had asked for the whole support of the playhouse, which amounted but to little more than one half of the mere *salaries* of the other theatre.

The Emperor commissioned the Court Marshal to examine my plan, and the latter approved of it.

"What will the German theatre cost according to this estimate?" said the Emperor.

"Sixty thousand rubles a year."

"And what has it hitherto cost?"

"Nothing."

This answer must naturally have astonished the Emperor. It was just however in one point of view. By dint of zeal, intense application, and unremitting efforts, I had made the winter receipts amount to thirty-two thousand rubles; and with this money I had been

able to defray every contingent expence: but the Marshal did not recollect, that during seven weeks of Lent the house would produce nothing, and during the summer months not much; that the theatre besides stood in need of great repairs and improvements. The Monarch himself could not be expected to enter into such particulars; and the more so, as the memorial did not specify any. It is therefore not at all surprising that he should have considered the sum too great.

I was too well acquainted with the disposition of the court in general towards the German theatre, and of course prepared (in case the Emperor should disapprove my plan) to reiterate my former request. My discharge at length was granted me in the most gracious terms, and I obtained at the same time the rank of Counsellor of the College.

I am fully convinced that the Court cannot keep up the German theatre, even in its present imperfect establishment, without disbursing thirty-seven thousand rubles annually.* Had it been observed to the Emperor at the time, that the improvements alone would have cost twenty-three thousand rubles, I have reason to believe, that his answer would have been different from what it was; especially as the young Empress is a great admirer of the German drama: but the word *nothing* could not well have produced any other effect.

Such are the circumstances of my discharge, respecting which the author of a paragraph in the Hamburgh Gazette had the goodness to observe, that it

*I am not uninformed, that Monsieur Miré, and a person of the name of Casazzi, have undertaken the business at a much lower rate, but *finis coronat opus*.

was not very clear, whether it was asked for or received. At Petersburg the matter was clear enough; but unhappily there are men in the world who are induced by envy to believe the contrary to what every one knows.

In speaking of the pension that was granted me, the same correspondent observes with equal malignity, and with a design to render the distinction less honourable to me, that I solicited it. He knew not that the Emperor Paul had secured the salary on his own privy-purse; and that pensions of that nature are frequently, and even commonly, continued after the resignation of the receiver; and that without having assailed the young Monarch with solicitations and entreaties, the favour was granted me on my mere request. I am too proud of this mark of kindness and benevolence in the young Emperor, and

too jealous of the reputation of an unassuming man, not to have placed the matter in its true point of view, even at the risk of fatiguing the patience of my readers.

On the 29th of April, I left Petersburg with my family, full of gratitude to the deceased Monarch, and to the reigning Emperor. We passed some weeks at Jesse, with M. Koch and his excellent family; from whence, accompanied by their best wishes, we proceeded to Wolmarshof, the country seat of Baron de Löwenstern, who had sent us the most cordial invitation.

My heart palpitated violently as I approached this abode of sincerity and truth: at length I beheld the accomplishment of the most ardent of my wishes: I was on the point of meeting a lady again, who, in the most terrible moment of my life, had sent me every

succour in her power. With what impatience did I long to press her hand to my lips and to my heart! I was also to meet the young man who had shed tears on my account, and who had strove to soften my afflictions with the tenderness of a brother. The first person I saw on getting out of the carriage was M. de Beyer. What varied emotions seized me as he approached! After him appeared Madame de Löwenstern. I was unable to utter a single word; my tears eloquently interpreted the feelings of my heart. I looked round for her worthy son, he flew to my embrace, and I pressed him with fraternal affection. How sweet is the remembrance of past evils in the circle of sympathizing friendship!

I here obtained some explanations of that part of my history, in which these worthy persons were concerned. The

letters I had written at Stockmannshof had been all forwarded by M. de Beyer to the Governor of Riga, except that intended for Count Cobenzel, which could not but have proved prejudicial to me. M. de Richter had dispatched them without the least scruple to the Emperor, who at first was much irritated at my escape, and replied to the Governor, that he must instantly summon M. de Beyer to Riga, and severely reprimand him for having suffered a state-prisoner to write letters in his house. This reprimand, which implied no small elogium of M. de Beyer's heart, was accordingly given, but it may be easily imagined how much the well known humanity of M. de Richter must have tended to soften the severity of it.

I learnt besides, that my Counsellor had communicated his instructions to

M. de Beyer, and that consequently he would have incurred great danger if he had espoused my cause more warmly than he did. M. de Beyer attempted to justify the cold and prudent M. Prostenius, and it is no fault of mine if my my own heart invalidated all his arguments.

The whole family had considered the Counsellor as a civil, kind-hearted man, and had placed great confidence in him. This mistake was very excusable in people of their excellent disposition; for never had I seen, in any instance whatever, so much *cruelty* united with so much *dissimulation*. He had waited on my wife, on his arrival at Petersburg, after having heard of my approaching deliverance, to give her joy. He told her that we were very intimate friends, and had lived together like two brothers during the whole journey. He even

paid me a visit, when he had heard in what a distinguished manner I had been treated by the Emperor, and meanly attempted to insinuate himself into my favour. I could not, however, bear the sight of him: he at length observed this, and discontinued his visits.

After having spent a few days very agreeably at Wolmarshof, we set off for Riga, where we were expected by our faithful friends. I had not the pleasure of finding the worthy Governor there; he was unfortunately ill in the country, but I found my kind friend Eckardt, and the learned Doctor Stoffregen, to whom I expressed all my gratitude. We accompanied the latter to his villa, a terrestrial paradise, at Graffenheyde, and we separated in a few days, bestowing on each other reciprocal benedictions and prayers.

Among other things, I learnt at Riga,

that a letter which my wife had written to the Duchess of Weimar, had been sent to Petersburg by the master of the Post-office, and had been read by the Emperor; that his Majesty had immediately returned it, with orders to have it sealed up again, and forwarded to its destination. Our friends augured something good from this incident; it is indeed certain, that the letter (a copy of which I possess) could not have failed to make a salutary impression on the kind heart of the Monarch. I therefore, perhaps, owe my deliverance, in some measure, to the very person, to whom of all others, I would most willingly owe it—to my own wife.

At Mittau the Governor of Courland was no longer to be found; he had been dismissed from his post. M. Sellen of Polangen, had likewise been discharged; I did not see him, but I found

the Lieutenant who had accompanied us to Mittau, and whose name is De Bogeslawski. He received me as an old friend, and compelled us to breakfast with him. On this spot, how did I run over the early scene of my misfortunes! How beneficent is nature, in causing the remembrance of past ills to produce an enjoyment equal to, and perhaps greater than that of past pleasures! I enquired after the honest Cossack, who had accompanied us on the coach-box: I wished to make him a present, but he was not in the way.

When we felt the carriage drive off—when we passed the guard-house—when the barrier was let down behind us—and when, a little further on, we beheld the Prussian eagle;—why should I blush to confess, that I burst into a flood of tears, that my wife also wept, and that we sunk into each other's arms? Not

that we had waited for this moment to give full scope to our feelings---No; the name of Alexander is every honest man's sufficient guarantee for his personal freedom; but it was a confused mixture of emotions, as powerful an inexplicable, that called forth these delicious tears. The view of the theatre of my misfortunes; the recapitulation of all the scenes through which I had struggled: the agony, which a year before I had suffered on the same road; the contrast of sensations; the happy and unforeseen change of circumstances; my gratitude to God, who had restored all that was dear to me; the delight at waking from my long and frightful dream;---all these considerations agitated every feeling of my heart, and forced the tears into my eyes. Thus impressed, I saluted the happy dominions of Frederic William III. The moment I set my foot upon his

frontiers, I considered myself as in my native country.

At Königsberg I found Count Kutaissoff, the favourite and confidential friend of the late Emperor. If any one could have given me information concerning the cause of my arrest, it was certainly he. I had long known him, but our acquaintance was during a period in which it would have been improper to have asked him any questions relating immediately to myself. But what I had not ventured to do at Petersburg could be done without any scruple here: I therefore hinted to him my wishes to be acquainted with the Emperor's reasons for having treated me with so much severity; and he replied, with the most unsuspicious frankness, "that his Majesty had acted from no particular motive, but that I had given him umbrage as an author. However," added

he, "you have seen with what readiness, and with what pleasure he corrected his error: he liked you; he has given you proofs of it; and had he lived, you would have received more."

Peace then to the ashes of a man, whose faults may be ascribed, in a great measure, to the nature of his education, to the extraordinary events that distinguished the period of his reign, and to the characters of the people who surrounded him! a man, who might often have been mistaken with regard to the *means* he employed to do good, but whose invariable aim was to be *good* and *just*; who scattered innumerable benefits around him, yet saw nothing but noxious plants spring up, whose blossoms pleased his eye, while their poisonous vapour tarnished and destroyed him!

I shall conclude with the insertion of

some French verses, which were circulated in Petersburg some days after the Emperor's death. I am unacquainted with the author, but his picture bears the stamp of truth.

On le connût trop peu, lui ne connût personne;
Actif, toujours pressé, bouillant, impérieux,
Aimable, seduisant, même *sans* la couronne,
Voulant gouverneur seul, tout avoir, tout faire mieux,
Il fit boucoup d'ingrats—et mourût malheureux!

APPENDIX.

An Examination of a Work entitled "Secret Memoirs of the Court of Russia."

I HAVE read the "Memoirs of the Court of Russia:" the book has made much noise in the world; more indeed than it merits. It has been, and is perhaps still, believed that the author drew his materials from authentic sources; it is therefore worth while to examine this work in detail. He has treated both the great and insignificant with such rancour, and attacked the honour and the virtue of the monarch and the nation with so much audacity, that I conceive I shall deserve the thanks of the Public by stripping off his mask, and openly contradicting him on several points, respecting which I have better

information than he could ever have obtained.

If, in imitation of himself, I were to derive my authorities from table-talk and the gossip of antichambers, it would be an easy task to refute every page of his book: being, however, averse to assume airs of importance, I repeat, that I shall only touch upon what my own conviction enables me to refute. If the *Secret Memoirs* should ever find their way into Russia, there will be no want of persons, still better informed than myself, to expose the falsehoods which they contain.

The author pretends, in his preface, to have held heaven knows what important post at Court; and the editor adds, that he had lived in the closest intimacy with people of rank and influence at Petersburg. Now, as it is the duty of every historian or compiler of

memoirs, who makes any pretension to public confidence, to shew how he has been able to come at the truth of what he asserts; let us say a few words concerning the author himself.

Monsieur de M * * * the younger, is a native of Switzerland *. The history of the early part of his life is here out of the question. He was received at the house of General Soltikoff, by whose interest he obtained the office of inspector of the stables of the Grand Duke Alexander, the present Emperor. The Grand Duke probably was familiar with him; but I do not see how his post could have procured him his *inti-*

* It is for the sake of his respectable brother that I do not give his name complete. He has, however, saved the reader the trouble of guessing it, for he has made himself so well known every where, that it seems he is not at all solicitous to remain in obscurity.

mate connexions with the principal people of rank and influence in the empire.

He had made verses, and in his own circle may have been considered as a man acquainted with the fashionable world; but he may be assured, that there are many great people and men of influence at Petersburg, who are to this moment ignorant of his existence. Let the reader judge from hence, if he *could* have always spoken the truth.

But, supposing we grant him this point, it is very certain it has not always been his *intention* to speak it. He himself, however, has been frank enough to confess, that nothing less than the most justifiable resentment forces him to speak out. What can be expected from a writer, whose resentment speaks for him, and who is not ashamed to add, that it is the proper business of indignation to reveal what criminal gra-

titude might induce him to conceal. It is his indignation alone then, that breaks out through the whole book, and which is of so violent a nature, that he is forced to consider *gratitude* as *criminal* when it does not allow him to disburden himself of every thing that weighs upon his heart. What can be expected from a writer who has faith in *criminal gratitude?*

And what is it, in fact, that has irritated him to such a degree? He has been ill treated, I will allow; and I am inclined to believe that he was innocent. Certain suspicions, some unmeaning words, something said in favour of the French troops, had induced the too hasty Emperor to banish M. de M * * * and his brother out of his dominions; but his Majesty did this without any degradation of their honour: he did not seize their fortunes, nor refuse to allow

their families to accompany them. They had fallen into disgrace, and that was all: the Emperor had withdrawn his confidence, and would have them no longer in his service;—nothing more. It will be said, that this was enough, and that their case was very severe. I allow it, but not sufficiently so to justify the transformation of gratitude into a thing that depends on circumstances. Had M. de M * * * been satisfied with asserting his innocence in a calm and satisfactory manner, every impartial reader would have applauded him. But this mass of scandalous anecdotes, his evident solicitude to collect every thing that could render the Russian Court either atrocious or ridiculous, shew clearly, that the Emperor Paul did not act imprudently in removing a petulant observer, who examined every thing that came in his way with a jaun-

diced eye. M. de M * * *'s own book is, in my opinion, the best justification of the Emperor's conduct towards the author. Let him undertake, in the boasted French republic, to write the scandalous chronicle of the *French court of the present day*, and I am persuaded that he would think himself well off if he escaped transportation to Cayenne.

He says, I have written only what I have seen, heard, or experienced myself. This is very singular. I find nothing throughout the whole book but things which were *heard of*, and of which I, too, with a thousand others, have heard, though in a different manner. If it were sufficient merely to give ear to things, to enable a man to write memoirs for posterity, the historic muse may erect a temple in every antichamber! If M. de M * * * would have us believe what he has neither seen, nor felt, nor expe-

rienced, but only heard, he ought to name his authorities; in default of which, he will allow us to place no more confidence in an inspector of the stables of the Grand Duke, than in any other subaltern officer of the Russian Court.

In the preface, (page 4) he calls the Emperor a *revengeful tyrant.* Paul was not in the least addicted to revenge. In the first emotions of anger, he might have often committed injuries; but to rancour and vengeance his heart was a stranger. I could name instances of persons, by whom, whether right or wrong, he conceived himself to be offended, and whom he punished at one moment, and at the next raised to the first dignities in the state. It is, however, needless to bring forward these examples, as they are already generally known. Had the Emperor been re-

vengeful, and consequently rancorous, (for these passions never operate separately) the annals of history would probably have held out one horrid attempt the less to posterity. M. de M * * * boasts of his *courage* and *frankness*, in uttering the words *revengeful tyrant*; but where is the honest man who does not consider, that he calls by too soft a name the wickedness he allows himself to commit?

One cannot help smiling at reading (page 5) that M. de M * * * feels and experiences that he is followed wherever he goes. The Emperor, in fact, made no farther mention of him after his departure, nor even thought more about him. It is still more disgusting to hear him soon after impudently assert, that he has exercised great moderation in drawing up his memoirs. I should be glad to know how it were

possible to cram a greater quantity of horrid matter into the compass of two volumes.

He confesses frankly enough that his *bad* memory has been his only source, as he had committed all his materials to the flames. It is indeed requiring a little too much of the reader to expect him to confide in the *bad* memory of an inspector of the Grand Duke's stables, for an account of all kinds of state and family secrets.

M. de M * * * gives no quarter to the poor German authors. He calls them all *pickthanks*, without supporting the epithet by a single case in point. Ah! M. de M * * *, were I to publish some of your poetry, who would deserve the name of pickthank better than yourself?

M. de M * * * endeavours to represent every Russian subject as an abject

slave; he even pretends that the nation, by a kind of apotheosis, has changed the name of Catherine to Jecatherine, which, according to him signifies *Arch-catherine*. A curious interpretation truly. *Jecatherine* is merely a name, and as little signifies *Archcatherine* as *agurke* (which in Livonia is used for *gurke*, a cucumber) signifies *archcucumber*.

In page 48, M. de M*** has the assurance to assert that the Emperor is the tyrant both of the empire and his family; and that he proscribes the dearest and most laudable feelings of nature. A more abominable falsehood than this was never uttered. I should fill a whole volume, were I to bring forward all the domestic incidents in which the Emperor Paul approved himself to be *a tender husband* and *a good father*; and I am only acquainted with the smaller part of that number. I do not pretend that he has

not often fallen into violent, though short, fits of anger, with his family, which have sometimes been attended with very serious consequences; but he is not on that account the less susceptible of the most tender feelings of nature.

It is unusual, for instance, to consult the inclinations of a Princess in the disposal of her hand; yet I know from the best authority, that the Emperor always left to his daughters the free choice of their husbands: in such cases, consulting the paternal feelings of his heart, rather than listening to motives of political interest, he entered into no promises with regard to an alliance, but on the express condition of its receiving his daughter's full approbation. I should be glad to be informed of many other Courts in which a like custom prevails!

When the deceased Grand Duchess Alexandrina took her leave of him, with what inexpressible tenderness did he fold her in his arms? How many tears did he shed upon the occasion? She was seated in her coach, when he again came down into the Court, and opening the carriage door, bestowed his blessing, in a broken voice, upon his darling child. Is this the conduct of a man who *proscribes the common feelings of nature?*

I could add many other instances, but I do not think, like M. de M***, that it is proper to print every thing I have been told. I shall, however, bring forward a case in direct contradiction to his senseless assertion, since it affords at the same time an example of the love and tenderness which the Emperor bore his family to the last moment of his life.

On the 11th of March, at five or six in the afternoon, a few hours before his death, when M. V———, an Aulic-Counsellor, who had been sent for by the Empress on business, was waiting her Majesty's orders in the anti-chamber, he observed, through a half-open door, the Emperor go to her. He appeared in very good humour, and said to her on entering the room, "My angel, I have brought you something that will give you pleasure." "As every favour does," replied the Empress, "which you confer." The Emperor then took a pair of stockings out of his pocket, which had been embroidered by the noble young ladies belonging to the institution, under the immediate patronage of her Imperial Majesty. After shewing this attention to his consort, he turned to his youngest children, who were playing about him, took them

in his arms, danced with them about the room, and, in a word, acted in every respect as the most affectionate father of a family would have done. M. V*** was deeply affected at this scene; it requires no comment, since it is to persons of feeling hearts alone that I address myself.

At page 79, M. de M*** makes a violent attack upon the principal nobility of the empire, during the last years of the reign of Catherine II. He says "they were without knowledge, without views, without elevation of mind, and utterly devoid of probity." He will not allow them even that vain honour, which, with respect to fidelity, stands in the same stead as hypocrisy does with regard to virtue. He charges them with "being as imperious as bashaws, as oppressive as tax-gatherers, as dishonest as lackeys, and as mercenary

as stage-waiting-maids;" in a word, he is not ashamed to call them, "the *rabble of the empire.*"

Let such a picture (which the most virulent passion alone could have been capable of sketching, and the most unbridled extravagance have finished) be placed beside the portrait of a *Repnin*, a man equally great in the cabinet and the field, of incorruptible integrity, and of the most generous liberality of sentiment:—of a *Romanzo*, a great general, who has bequeathed his virtues to his children:—of a *Besborodki*, who, though a man of pleasure, had the best of intellects, and was the most indefatigable of statesmen:—of a *Wasilew*, the treasurer of the empire, who without flattery might be compared with the great Colbert himself for talents and probity: of a *Soltikoff*, a *Markoff*, &c. and the indignant reader would then be tempted

to bestow on what M. de M*** is pleased to to term *courage* and *frankness*, epithets of a far different signification. And when he has the audacity to add, "that the nobility have pensioned their servants, their buffoons, their secretaries, and even the tutors of their children, out of the public treasure, of which they had the management;" the assertion is of so dishonourable and so calumnious a nature, that the man who has committed it at random to paper, unsupported by any kind of proof, deserves to be arraigned as a criminal at the bar of justice.

I request the reader further to remark how often M. de M***, under the influence of passion, contradicts his own assertions. He gives the name of rabble to the great people in the reign of Catherine II. and yet makes it criminal in her successor to have dismissed them on

his accession to the crown: and after allowing, that those by whom the Emperor Paul was surrounded, were people of less moral depravity than the discarded courtiers, he is nevertheless continually turning them into ridicule, and calling them *upstarts*.

At page 82, he repeats the hacknied assertion, "that Russia cannot boast of having any laws, but that it is merely governed by *ukases* or prescripts." It must be confessed that the legislative commission established by Catherine, had not done all that might have been expected from it; many more improvements, however, were made in the reign of that immortal woman than M. de M*** seems to have been aware of. Her incomparable *Instructions for the government of the Russian empire; her Instructions for the towns; for the nobility; for the trades, &c.* are not mere pre-

scripts, but form altogether a complete code of laws. During the space of ten years, I was myself in the habits of judging a multitude of suits by these laws, and I was seldom driven to the necessity of having recourse to a foreign code.

This is not the place to examine whether the plan of the Empress to introduce a an uniform code of laws into her vast empire, was not rather a pious wish, than a measure at all possible. It would doubtless be a desirable thing to abolish that confusion, which cannot fail to result from the great number of customs and privileges which are continually at variance with each other. The tribunal, for instance, where I had the honour to preside, was a court of appeal from the inferior provincial tribunals, and all the litigious causes of Reval, Hapsal, Weissenstein, and Baltischport, were decided

there. But I was obliged to judge a Reval suit by the laws of Lübec, an Hapsal suit by the laws of Sweden, and a Baltischport one by those of Russia, &c. circumstances which rendered the administration of justice extremly complicated and troublesome.

M. de M*** (page 92) carries his love of paradox so far as to maintain, that the Empress Catherine, the friend and the favorite of the muses, did not patronise the arts and sciences, but merely purchased libraries and collections of pictures from motives of ostentation, and sent medals to German authors who dedicated their works to her. Such silly assertions are not worth refuting; they ought to be treated with a smile of contempt.

It is ridiculous enough to hear, in what a self-sufficient manner M. de M*** decides on all the literary pro-

ductions that appeared during the thirty-two years of the reign of Catherine. "Except a few works on Natural History," says he, "no book worthy of being known elsewhere, has honoured the Russian press." He was doubtless unacquainted with the greater number, and knew only the title pages of some of the others. *Euler*, for instance, has escaped his notice. On the other hand, he relates wonderful things of *intire libraries*, that had been discovered among the ruins on the banks of the Irtisch.

M. de M*** (page 110) says, "that the Germans at Petersburg are all *artizans*, principally *tailors* and *shoemakers*." The inspector of the stables might as well have added *saddlers*, who likewise are chiefly of that country. In this view he would not have comprised one half of the Germans who inhabit the city, the number of which exceeds thirty

thousand. Almost every *merchant*, and a great number of the *people in office* are Germans. M. de M*** also mistakes when he pretends, "that more victuals are consumed in the German houses than in others, and that the guests are overwhelmed with ceremonies and compliments." It is true indeed, that the plain Germans have no idea of the *courage* and *frankness* in which Mr. de M*** so eminently excels.

The circumstances which he states (page 117) of the colonels being the despots of their respective regiments, and of every thing relating to the economy of them passing through their hands, are not without foundation; but he should have added, "that these abuses were reformed on the accession of the Emperor Paul to the throne."

M. de M*** (page 131) charges the author of the Description of Peters-

burg with unpardonable negligence, in having confounded his important person as *a man of letters* with that of his brother. "Can any one, after this," says he, "depend on descriptions?" And why not? Is it of any consequence to the reader, to know the author of a few trifling verses? If the more interesting accounts are exact, he will readily overlook matters of such small import. Besides M. de M*** ought to be happy whenever he is confounded with his worthy brother. That unassuming respectable man lives on his estate near Erlangen, and has not been a little alarmed at the publication of the *Secret Memoirs*. Some people, not having known him personally, have taken him for the author of the book; but he has often explained himself to his friends on the subject, in a very earnest and serious manner.

At page 132, Mr. de M*** unjustly upbraids the Emperor with having left the most useful of his mother's public undertakings in an unfinished state, and with having erected nothing but barracks and exercise-houses. M. de M*** among these works mentions the quays and canals, and forgets that the Emperor had entirely banked up the Moika with free-stone. He has his reasons, perhaps, for not mentioning the hospital for the reception of military orphans, which owes its very existence to that Monarch; and in which upwards of eight hundred children of both sexes are boarded and instructed, and placed in suitable conditions when they have attained a certain age. This institution is directed by the respectable Colonel de Weismarn and his lady, who, has I have several times observed with great delight, is beloved by the children as a

mother. The Emperor frequently visited this asylum; it was one of his most favourite walks. He took the most tender interest in its welfare; laid aside his crown on entering the mansion, and appeared only as the father of the children; and never did he leave the spot unaccompanied with the benedictions of the innocent objects of his care. M. de M*** ought not to have been silent on matters of this nature; but perhaps his correspondents gave him no account of them, having enough to do to furnish him with the tattle of anti-chambers.

If we were unacquainted with the reasons which induced M. de M*** to spare the memory of Prince Potemkin, we should be surprised at the slight manner in which he touches upon the subject of that famous man. The insulting contempt he always entertained

for his fellow-creatures, whom he only considered as the instruments of his own grandeur, is but too generally known. Never did the Emperor Paul venture to go half the lengths in the indulgence of his caprices as that favourite had gone. Few people can be strangers to the anecdote respecting the honest Moscovite merchant, whom he ordered to be taken up by the police and sent to Petersburg, for having suffered a lady to see his long beard. The unfortunate man arrived at the capital, and Potemkin, having forgotten his beard, suffered him to languish six months in confinement. At length the satrap deigned to pay some attention to this famous beard: the merchant was sent back to Moscow, in a ruined state of health, and found that his wife had died with grief, and that his affairs were ruined. The Emperor Paul has committed acts of violence

from mere hastiness of temper, but never to gratify his caprice; and whatever he did, he always imagined that he was doing an act of justice.

No one, except M. de M***, has felt that the death of Potemkin had made *an immense void* in the empire. The story of the Empress having fainted away three times successively on hearing the news of his death, seems very improbable: at least there are well informed people, who pretend that his power having attained to a prodigious height, and grown superior to all kind of control, had become very troublesome to Catherine, and that after his death she acknowledged herself to be a much freer agent than before.

M. de Lanskoy, it seems, has found singular favour with our author. He styles him the lover of the arts, and the friend of talents. In truth, he was the

most ignorant man about the Court, and the Empress always blushed for him whenever he began to speak.

M. de M*** (page 164) observes, that Paul was more a Russian than his mother, and that he always maintained that a Count or Prince of the holy Greek empire, was preferable to one of the holy Roman empire. It is not my business to decide whether the mother or the son was in the right; I am, however, of opinion, that it becomes an Emperor of Russia to confer, with his own hands, the dignities with which he wishes to see his subjects decorated.

At page 157, the author speaks in a contemptuous manner of General Pistor, one of the most worthy Germans that ever served in the Russian army. He calls him a *Russian satellite*: A little farther on, he sneers at the barbarous names of *Kretschetnikoff* and *Cachowske*.

"Heavens! what names!" says he, "and the men who bear them, are still more uncouth!" He forgets, however, that the name of his hero *Kosciusko* is not more harmonious.

At page 173, M. de M*** speaks of a statue that the Duke de Feuillade erected at his own expence, to his master Louis XIV. and he adds, "that Potemkin had done nothing for Catherine that could be compared with the Frenchman's gallantry. All the actions of that favourite were, indeed, tainted with hypocrisy and cruelty: when the Empress travelled to the Tauride, Potemkin, supposing she might expect to see, as she went along, the towns and flourishing villages of which he had so often spoke to her, had ordered representations, in painting, of the fronts of the houses composing such towns and villages, to be erected on each side the

road. To a cursory observer the effect must have been very fine; and in order to enliven the landscape, it was necessary to summon all the peasants for twenty leagues round the country with their flocks, and to post them near these decorations. As the Empress went along, she beheld the meadows covered with sheep and horned cattle, attended by well clothed shepherds. She was struck with the showy painted houses, and imagined she saw the towns which existed in the calendar,* and which she found swarming with inhabitants. This gallantry was not in fact so durable as that of the Duke de la Feuillade, but it was at least more artfully fancied.

* The Petersburg calendar, in the reign of Catherine, contained a list of all the cities either existing or planned in the Russian empire, with their respective situations and distance from the capital.

The author (page 224) endeavours to degrade one of the best institutions of the Emperor, or at least to lessen its merit: I mean the permission which all his subjects had to direct their letters and petitions immediately to himself. M. de M*** tells us, there was a kind of office upon the palace stair-case, where every one might deliver letters, but he adds, "that Paul finding, contrary to his expectation, more petitions than denunciations, grew tired of noticing them, and that every thing soon fell into its former chaos; that the secretaries employed to examine the letters became as heretofore the arbitrators of the unfortunate people who had had recourse to their master."

It is my duty to refute this accusation. From the moment of the Emperor's accession to the throne, to the last day of his life, every one of his

subjects were allowed to make application to him in writing, and they were sure of receiving a categorical answer in the course of a few days. The secretaries were in no respect the arbitrators of the petitioner's fate. The man who had dared to make a false extract would certainly not have escaped punishment: the Emperor frequently demanded a sight of the original, and ordered it to be read to him. An instance of this had taken place in my own case, and it was nothing more than a mere letter of thanks that I had written. The secretaries had always the letters in their possession, nor could they venture, under the inspection of so severe a master, to make unfair extracts, being never sure that the Emperor might not suddenly require a sight of the original, to satisfy himself as to the faithfulness of the report.

It is true, that the reporter had considerable influence, and that the success of the petition often depended on the manner in which it was represented. But was the Monarch to blame for this? It is natural that he should have confidence in the people he had chosen, and he could not employ more efficacious means to render them faithful, than by inspecting their proceedings occasionally and unawares. The Emperor could not possibly have read every petition he received; and in support of this assertion, I am enabled to relate an anecdote relative to the early part of the present Emperor's reign; who, as well as his father, allows every one to write to him, and even to present their letters in person; and may the choicest blessings of heaven reward him for this indulgence!

Whenever he went from the palace to the parade, he had to pass through a

triple row of suppliants, who held their petitions in their hands. The number of petitioners increasing, and the Emperor being unwilling to abolish the privilege, he usually sent out his adjutants some minutes before him to collect these papers. I have been several times present at their return to the anti-chamber; they were usually three in number, and each of them had a handkerchief filled with petitions in one hand, and his hat full in the other. "O God!" cried the Emperor one day, with a smile, when he saw them return thus loaded; and the exclamation was by no means improper, for there were upwards of three hundred letters in the hats and handkerchiefs. Every day produced as many; and supposing that the Emperor had devoted two minutes to the perusal of each letter, *he must have read ten hours a day!* Among these I do not include the num-

bers of letters which came by post, and which were sent to the Secretary of State. The Emperor, thus occupied, would have had no time for the most urgent concerns of life, much less for the great business of the empire. Every thing must have given way to the caprice of the petitioners, who often made the most absurd requests. A woman one day wrote to inform him she had lost a cow, and to beg another in its place.

The practice introduced by the Emperor Paul of inserting the refusals in the public Gazette was certainly a very harsh measure; but it might always have been evaded by personal application to the Secretary of State, who had the answers ready for the perusal of the respective petitioners. The Minister was, in fact, prevented, by the multiplicity of his avocations, from expediting written

answers to every letter that was received at his office.

M. de M*** (page 223) tells us, that dishonesty is inherent in the Russian Government, and connected with the national character, which is deficient in morals, probity, and public spirit. Happily, while he was penning this horrid description, his conscience seems to have stung him a little, and obliged him to add the following note, which he precedes by an emphatical exclamation. "Alas!" says he, "I little thought while I was writing these lines, to find the same infamous practices triumph in a republican Government, and in a regenerated country." If, therefore, he is convinced that neither national character nor want of public spirit are the real sources of corruption and rapine in populous cities, but that such disorders arise merely from luxury and ambition,

why did he not cancel his unjust assertion? His book would certainly have contained sufficient invective against the Russian nation without this charge.

Page 238, M. de M*** describes, simply from report, the prison of the unhappy Prince Iwan, at Schlusselburg. He calls it a dungeon, the windows of which, he says, were stopped up with planks, and scarcely afforded a glimpse of light. I myself visited this prison in the year 1782, when I accompanied General Bawr down the canal of Schlusselburg to its outlet in the lake of Ludoga. I found it, indeed, gloomy enough, but not to the degree M. de M*** represents it; I saw the chamber in which the Prince was confined; it was lofty and spacious, and sufficiently light. The sky, however, could not be seen from the chamber, on account of the great height of the walls that inclosed the

court in which it was situated; but the Commander assured us that the Prince had permission to walk out into the area.

I shall pass over several anecdotes which M. de M*** scatters over his book, to shew his own importance and the extent of his connexions. At one time, it is such a one, at another, this or that person, who had patronized and provided for him. Supposing all this to be true, of what use is the display of so much vanity? what are those people to us, in whose favour he condescends to act the part of a *German pickthank?* and what concern have we with the flattering letters he had written to kept women to obtain a few hundred rubles, or a paltry place? The author ought to feel, that in relating such trifles, he weakens the impression he would fain make on his readers, by the display of his grand principles of liberty.

With all possible self-love, the writer is ever laying hold of opportunities of speaking of himself. At page 249, we are obliged to hear him recite a *pick-thank* business in verse, in which the honour paid to the memory of Catherine forms a singular contrast with the horrid things he relates of her in his *Secret Memoirs*. In these verses he speaks thus of that Princess:

"The north's fierce eagle cowers on the ground;
"Its bright ſtar beams no more, &c."

And at page 67, in the second volume, he calls this very star an *old fury*.

At page 265, and a little further on, the reader is allowed to recover himself a little from the effects of the multitude of caricatures with which he had been long pestered. We here find a description equally beautiful and just of the person and character of the Empress-mo-

ther. But this pleasure is of short duration, and as if M. de M*** were utterly averse to say a handsome thing of any one, he adds, in a note, " that it must be acknowledged her good qualities are not a little obscured by vanity."

Those who know that this Princess has been the great benefactress of the author, must shudder to observe the *frankneſs* and *courage* with which he had been able to stifle and suppress his *criminal gratitude.*

At page 271, he judges equally erroneously of the reigning Emperor; and if there were no other proof that the author was never in any situation about the Grand Duke, which could enable him to judge of the worth of that Prince, this alone would be sufficient. He thus expresses himself: " Alexander is of a happy but passive disposition; he possesses neither resolution nor con-

fidence sufficient to look out for men of merit, who are always modest and reserved.

One single day of his reign has been sufficient to refute this silly assertion. The choice he has made of the upright *Beklescheff* for Court-advocate; of *Count Panin*, *Prince Kourakin*, of *Troschinski*, for Ministers; of *Wasilieff* for Treasurer, &c. proves with what a penetrating eye the youthful monarch can distinguish real merit, and with what laudable eagerness he exercised his judgment. I shall not copy the ridiculous predictions of M. de M***, they do not merit refutation.

M. de M*** has done Count Nicolas Soltikoff the honour to say nothing about him. He is satisfied with having named him, and with putting four rows of points after his titles. It is probable that his sublime genius could not, in

the present instance, intirely triumph over the sentiments of *criminal gratitude.*

M. de M * * * (page 308) accuses the Emperor of having treated the old regiment of guards with too much contempt. "The severest thing," adds he, "this Prince could say to those officers with whom he was dissatisfied, was, that *they were only fit to serve in the guards.*" Supposing this anecdote to be true, the Emperor was far from wrong. The officers of the guards, during the reign of Catherine, were effeminate in their manners and their dress; they drove about the streets in whiskeys and four, were great men at the theatres, gamed deeply, and kept opera girls. I speak from my own observation. The guards at this period were very favourable to the advancement of young men of family and fortune. Any man who

had connections at Court, could procure his son to be enrolled in a regiment while he was an infant in his cradle; and his promotion took place as regularly as in real service. My eldest son, though a child, was appointed corporal of the guards, then *fourier*, and afterwards ensign, without ever having been at Petersburg, or seen the regiment to which he belonged. On this footing he would have advanced with four thousand of his little comrades, had not Paul, on his accession to the throne, suddenly dismissed every officer of the guards who was not capable of service. This regulation gave me some pain at the time, yet I could not but feel that it was perfectly just.

M. de M*** (page 312,) relates the story of the advancement of *Count de Rostopschin*, who was a considerable time minister of foreign affairs, and in high

favour at Court. I shall take this opportunity of adding the history of his disgrace; I have it from the best authority, and it reflects great honour on the Emperor.

It is well known that Count de Panin, a man of great integrity, had fallen a sacrifice to the dexterous jealousy of that Minister, and that the Emperor had exiled him to one of his country seats near Moscow. Some time afterwards, a gentleman belonging to the office of foreign affairs, whose name I forget, made a tour through that neighbourhood, and having written a friendly letter to M. de Murawieff, of Petersburg, he mentioned among other things *that he had visited Cincinnatus at his farm.* He likewise added the names of some relations he had been with, and entered into some family particulars of a very harmless nature. This letter fell into the hands

of Count de Rostopschin, who considered, or rather affected to consider it, as having a suspicious tendency. He laid it before the Emperor, and endeavoured to persuade his Majesty that Count de Panin was the writer, and had made use of another name to serve his own purposes; that Cincinnatus meant *Prince Repnin*, and the names of the pretended relations signified the friends and partizans of that Prince.

The Emperor had a great opinion of the discernment of his minister, and sent orders to Count de Soltikoff, the Governor of Moscow, to reprimand Count de Panin on the subject of this letter. The Count declared he had not written at all to Petersburg. The Emperor, blinded by prejudice, took his denial for mere obstinacy, and became extremely irritated against him. He sent the original letter to Moscow, in

order to convict the supposed writer of falsehood, and at the same time commanded him to remove to another of his estates two hundred versts farther off.

During these transactions the real writer of the letter, who happened to be still in the neighbourhood of Moscow, was informed of the whole business. He had the highest esteem for Count de Panin, who had formerly been his benefactor, and he was prompted by honour and gratitude to do every thing in his power to exculpate him. He was much alarmed at the mischief in which he had unconsciously involved him, and he immediately set off for the capital and explained the whole affair to Count Kutaissoff, referred to his own hand-writing, and confessed he meant by Cincinnatus, Count de Panin; that he had not called him so to disguise his

true name, but on account of the striking similarity which he conceived to exist between the character of the Count and of that worthy Roman. Report of this deposition was instantly made to the Emperor, and at the same time an account arrived from Moscow, stating that the letter was not the hand-writing of Count de Panin. His Majesty seemed much hurt on the occasion, and exclaimed with noble warmth: "He is a monster, and would make me the instrument of his secret vengeance! I must rid myself of him." Count de Rostopschin was accordingly dismissed from his service.

At page 315, the author pours out a torrent of abuse and invective against Baron de Nicolai, President of the Academy and Counsellor of State, a gentleman well known in Germany for his excellent poetical productions, adored

by his inferiors as a father, esteemed by his friends for his integrity and humanity, and respected by all who knew him for his talents and genius. He has doubtless had the misfortune of being blind to the great merit of our author, or perhaps he may have considered some of his verses to have been a little insipid; otherwise the writer of the *Memoirs* would not surely have said, that a man so generally respected as M. de Nicolai is, had received a few hundred souls (peasants belonging to an estate) to finish the corruption of his own, and that he was the tyrant of his village, &c. That M. de Nicolai had complained that his boors in Finland produced him scarcely any revenue, signified neither more nor less than if the proprietor of an estate in Germany should lament that it produced him but a trifle. A man must be possessed of a very malignant *frank-*

ness indeed to attack the reputation of a person of M. de Nicolai's worth, upon such vague grounds. But whose reputation is sacred in the eyes of M. de M***? What he likewise hints respecting the haughty reserve of M. de Nicolai, is equally false; I never observed the least symptom of it. It is possible, that he thought it necessary to be on his guard with M. de M***, and the event has proved that he was in the right.

M. de M*** adds, that the German scribblers treated M. de Nicolai as a Mæcenas. I foresee he will include me in the number, but this gives me no concern. I shall only add, that I have not the happiness to be particularly known to M. de Nicolai, and I consider that on the present occasion I am doing honour to my pen in making it subservient, without the least personal mo-

tives, to the elogium of virtue and talents.

At page 326, the author seems desirous of persuading his readers that he had succeeded the estimable La Harpe. He is always solicitous to join his name with that of some celebrated man, as the wren seats itself on the back of the eagle to approach nearer to the sun. La Harpe and M***, says he, who were about the young Prince. The expression was artfully chosen; the reader may naturally conclude they had filled the same post. He afterwards adds, that the old tutor of Paul was likely to experience the fate of Seneca and Burrhus. Of what use can such falsities be? It is well known that old Aepinus is out of his mind, and that he receives a considerable pension.

M. de M*** (page 340) says, that the Emperor, through a refinement of ven-

geance, forbad Mad. Huss to accompany M. de Markoff in his exile, while it is notorious that this lady left the stage, and immediately joined the disgraced minister, with whom she has remained ever since.

I now come to two passages which oblige me to go back and copy a few periods from the author's preface. "I shall not imitate those writers," says he, "who, under pretence of furnishing memoirs and anecdotes of the countries through which they have travelled, ransack the private concerns of individuals, and expose *family secrets*. *To asperse the characters of the inhabitants of a country is but a bad way of acknowledging the hospitality we have received from them.*

Here M. de M*** has pronounced sentence against himself. Not content with having slandered, in the most shameful manner, the inhabitants of Russia and

their national character, he exposes *family secrets*, relates disgraceful anecdotes of Count Romanzo and his children; and would have his benefactor, Count Soltikoff, send his wife ***. I am ashamed to copy his indecent language. What judgment, therefore, shall we form of a man who ostentatiously displays, in his preface, principles of honour and delicacy, and violates them in so flagrant a manner in every page of his book.

I now come to the end of his first volume, after having experienced no small degree of trouble and disgust, during the perusal of it, and I am very averse to go on with a task that must create me still more. If I lived in Russia I should remain silent, not only to avoid all suspicion of being influenced by improper notions, but because it would be absolutely superfluous to refute calum-

nies in a country where they are generally known to be such. As I live, however, in a distant nation, where I find, to my great astonishment, the falsehoods and calumnies of M. de M*** have met with some belief, I therefore consider it as a duty, which the love of truth and the feelings of gratitude impose upon me, to continue my refutation.

I shall say nothing of his ridiculous predictions at the beginning of the second volume, by which he endeavours to excite the Russians to revolt, in imitation of the French. Time has shewn that M. de M***, though a great compiler of anecdotes, is but a sorry politician. We see with indignation, what pains he has taken to stir up the principal nobility against their lawful Sovereign. Fortunately for Russia, M. de M*** is not a man whose machina-

tions are likely to do mischief; and the great families whose names he has so unwarrantably made use of, treat him with deserved contempt.

In a note at page 26, M. de M*** says, that in Livonia children are sometimes taken from the breasts of their mothers, to make way for puppies which have lost theirs. A shocking accusation! I have been long and well acquainted with Livonia and Estonia, yet I never heard of any such practices; and bad must be the heart of a man, who could advance such a charge without proof. Let M. de M*** name the place where this has ever happened. He who has *seen*, *heard*, *experienced*, and *felt*, every thing which he has recorded, ought, doubtless, to name the monstrous actors of such scenes, or the reader will be apt to take the story for one of the many fables that are crowded into his work.

M. de M*** (page 82) declares, "that theft is the prevailing vice in Russia. I doubt," adds he, "if any people upon earth are more naturally inclined to pilfer the property of one another than the Russians; from the first minister and general of an army, down to the lackey, or common soldier, all steal, and pilfer, and cheat. A stranger," continues he, "who travels with a Russian, of whatever rank the latter may be, will learn to his cost not to leave any thing on his dressing-table or desk."* However atrocious this accusation may be in itself, it becomes still more so on account

* The moment after I had written this, I read the following piece of intelligence in the *Clef du Cabinet*: "Plunder and robbery are so common in France, that many people consider themselves unfortunate, merely for want of opportunities of committing such crimes." Shall we form from hence a general opinion of the French?

of the reason which the writer alleges for this propensity. "Why are the Russians," says he, "greater thieves than other half-civilized nations? It is owing to *the immorality of the Greek religion.*" This is arrant nonsense! Every one knows, that the French were never more notoriously guilty of robbery and knavery of every kind, than at the very time in which they were paying homage to the *Goddess of Reason*, and overthrowing every other altar; consequently M. de M*** must maintain, according to his way of arguing, that such enormities were owing to *the immorality of reason.* He endeavours to support his assertion by the examples of several nations subject to the Russian empire, which are not of the Greek communion. He is, however, much mistaken; the Livonians and Estonians, whom he names among others, are as

much addicted to theft and drunkenness as the Russians; and the Tocheranists and Tunguoes, among whom I myself have been, have by no means a better reputation.

In general M. de M*** suffers himself to be drawn into the strangest paradoxes and most palpable contradictions. In support of this charge I shall mention the singular motive to which he ascribes the source of Russian hospitality.—"Their possessions," says he, "are so insecure, that they live, as it were, but from day to day, and therefore willingly dispense their precarious pittances." Never since Russia has been a country have such motives of hospitality prevailed. To this I may add, the disdainful and ludicrous manner in which he speaks of the Russian soldiers; "they are brave," says he, "out of cowardice." One would imagine M. de M*** had

belonged to M. Schlegel's school, so ridiculous is his extravagance, and so extravagant his ridicule.

At page 113, it is the Russan ladies' turn to be ill treated, in order that neither sex nor condition may find any quarter with him. M. de M*** names three or four husbands, who, according to the family anecdotes he has heard, are ruled by their wives, and he concludes from thence, that petticoat-government prevails all over the empire. A man, who on every occasion names the French as models of perfection, should refrain from touching upon that point, as there is no country in Europe in which females have had, and still have, so much influence as in France. His anecdotes besides are not authentic. Where he asserts, that Count Puschkin, who commanded in Finland, dared not make a movement without having dis-

patched a courier to his lady for advice, I should be inclined to consider it as mere pleasantry, if he did not support it by the most serious assertions. It is likewise not true, that Madame de Merlin commanded the regiment of Tobolsk at Narva, as no Colonel of that name had ever been at the head of it. It had been for some time commanded by a Russian of the name of *Merlin*: the officers were chiefly Germans and French, and I never knew any of them mean enough to make their reports to Madame Merlin at her toilet.

At page 121, he observes, "I am not the first who has remarked, that in Russia the women are in general more barbarous and wicked than the men, in as much as they are still more ignorant and superstitious than they. They seldom travel, learn scarcely any thing, and never use their needle. They rarely

ever read, and are still seldomer employed in domestic concerns."

I know not whether M. de M*** has seen more good company in Russia than I have; but I can with great truth assert, I have every where found just the contrary of what he is pleased to advance. The ladies of Petersburg are not indeed free from the failings which are in general ascribed to those of all great cities, but they possess virtues for which we may look in vain in many other capitals.

The horrid things M. de M*** relates of Princess K---ky, prove nothing. Let the author read Klem's Annals of the Government of Prussia, and he will find the story of a woman still more execrable, who tortured her own daughter to death: it would, however, be silly to conclude from thence, that the Prussian women are cruel. It is besides remark-

able enough, that M. de M*** should conceal the name of this fury, and treat her in other respects with such apparent favour. Throughout his book he does not scruple to name at full length whatever worthy or distinguished person he wishes to defame, and this abominable woman is spared. His sympathy perhaps suggested this indulgence. He is also equally kind to another lady of the Court, who had shut up her hair-dresser for three years together in a dark cage. Why does not the author, who names every one else, tell the world who this monster is? Why has she escaped his indignation any more than the worthy Baron de Nicolai, and a hundred others, who never shut up people in cages?

I beg leave to doubt the existence of the horrible *Club Physique*, said to have been discovered at Moscow. The re-

port indeed reached me, as it did M. de M**, but I have no better proofs of the truth of it than he has. Besides, if such club did exist, it is not more imperious to the reputation of the Russian women, than the associations of the same kind, which formerly administered their poison in Paris, and perhaps still do, are to the French woman in general.

At page 135, M. de M*** says, "it is not in Russia we must look for women like the Julia of Rousseau, as the land of slavery is not the scene of the tender and elevated passions. Yet he discovers in that very country much sensibility, and much interesting melancholy."—What contradictions!

At page 136, he says, "the Russian women rarely possess any of the *domestic virtues*. Those virtues are indeed uncommon in great cities. If M. de M*** had seen more of Russia than what he

could have seen at Petersburg, he would perhaps have held a different language. I say perhaps, for it is probable he would have surveyed every object with a jaundiced eye.

While the author treats the Russian ladies with such severity, he reserves all his panygeric for the class of preceptors, who, according to his account, have eminently contributed to civilize the country. I recollect to have heard that M. de M*** began his career in that line, and this accounts for his partiality. The Germans, as one might have foreseen, are made to serve as shades to the picture, and he takes care to ridicule their *pedagogical erudition.*

One of the most flagrant falsities in his book, is the assertion he has made, "that there are no public schools in the provinces of Livonia, Estonia, and Courland." The academy of nobles at Re-

val, the excellent public seminary of that town, the academy of Riga, and many other establishments of this kind in the same place, are so generally and so advantageously known, that we cannot tax the writer with ignorance, but must ascribe his assertions to more odious motives. The schools of these provinces are, in some respects, preferable to those in Germany; and it is well known, that the young Livonians, Estonians and Courlanders, who finish their education at German universities, are generally remarkable for elegant erudition.

At page 211, the author relates his own history; and with singular modesty he declares, that he rendered himself dear to his friends by the gentleness of his manners, and gained their esteem by his wit and good sense. He quotes, with much complacency, a kind of apo-

logy, which appeared in the name of his relations and friends in M. d'Archenholtz's Minerva, and which censured the too hasty conduct of the Emperor towards him. Of this piece he gives a literal translation in his memoirs. I am sorry, however, to be forced to convince him of his error; the author of this apology is no other person than myself. Among all his boasted relations not a soul stood forward in his behalf. I thought to have done him some service by publishing the paper. M. d'Archenholtz himself can confirm this fact, to whom I sent at the same time another piece, entitled, *On the Administration of Justice in Russia, in the German Provinces*, but without affixing any name. At that period I believed M. de M*** to have been entirely innocent. I should have been far from espousing his cause, had I known what

he has since given us to understand, (page 233) that he was concerned in certain political plans: I conceived him to be innocent of the charge, as his interest and influence were very low, and the pretended *Philadelphic Society* signified nothing at all. His pertness, however, shews that the Emperor Paul acted wisely in sending him out of his dominions. It is not true, that the Emperor sequestrated the fortune of the two Madames de M***. The elder brother conveyed his fortune out of the country, and if the younger did not do so also, it was because he had a law-suit at Petersburg, which enabled his adversary to claim and to obtain security.

At the close of these remarks I shall insert one of the most offensive passages in the memoirs relative to the slavery of the peasants, and to which I shall

freely add some observations of my own. Heaven be praised! the moment is now arrived in which it is not dangerous to speak, and in which likewise, a hint properly applied, may be attended with very salutary effects.

"The lower ranks of people in Russia," says M. de M***, "are averse to industry, because they never labour for themselves, and have in fact no idea of property. They are without country, laws, religion, morality, or honour; addicted to theft, to rapine, to knavery; and, on the other hand, they are hospitable, serviceable, lively, trusty, and courageous." (What contradictions! what incompatible contradictions!) "In order that a few thousand men should have wheaten bread, thirty millions of slaves must eat grass and gnaw the bark of trees, like beavers, which animals, in point of intelligence

are much their superiors. Should these wretched people have laid up a pittance, their masters take it from them, and render their captivity still more abject. Men with grey heads and patriarchal beards, prostrate themselves on the ground, and suffer themselves to be flogged like children. There are some masters who have even forced the son to scourge his own father. If the peasant is taken for a soldier, his lord has a right to give his wife to another; and if he has any children, they are so disposed of that he is certain never to see them again."

It would be superfluous to refute all these horrid assertions. Every atrocity which might perhaps have been committed one single time, is carefully collected by M. de M***, and transformed into a national custom or a fundamental law. Exaggerations only tend to make

bad worse, and counteract the good which might result from cool and impartial discussion.

For my own part, I have always found in my different journies through Russia, that the peasants are laborious and active, that they love their country, have distinct notions of right and wrong, are in general in easy circumstances, and that their habitations are clean and neat, their disposition gay, and that contentment is marked upon their countenances. They are not unacquainted with the nature of property and possessions; they are sensible that when they have saved a little sum, they can offer it to their master, and thereby obtain his leave to exercise their industry from the extremities of the empire to the metropolis. They know, and they have seen, that a hundred thousand of their comrades have obtained these benefits, and they them-

selves aspire to the same advantages. Their principal traffic consists in fish, wood, and vegetables, and their labour is employed in brick-making, tiling, masonry, carpenters' work, &c. In a word, the gloomy picture M. de M*** draws is, at most, applicable to the peasantry of Livonia and Estonia, and not at all to those of the empire at large.

I shall not deny, that the author is in a great degree right respecting these two provinces. I shall confine my remarks to Estonia, being better acquainted with it than with Livonia. There, I must confess, the peasant has neither property nor the prospect of possessing any. He is a slave in every sense of the word, and a negro in Jamaica has no cause to envy his lot.

Far be it from me to insinuate that all the nobles of Estonia are tyrants: there are many among them who respect the laws of humanity, and the following

have the pleasure to observe, from my own knowledge, come under that description: Meff. *de Toll* of Elz, *d'Essen* of Erras, *Wilkinson* of Chudleigh, *d'Ungern-Sternberg* of Linden, *de Schilling* of Orsena, *de Krusentern* of Jerlap, *de Mayendorf* of Sallentack, *de Rosen* of Rackamois, *de Rebinder* of Kurtena, *de Klugen* of Schwarzen, *de Klugen* of Lodensee, *de Rennekampff* of Koch, &c. &c. I could considerably augment the list, but it would be useless while a part only of the rest are unlike them. A peasant may have the good fortune to live twenty or thirty years under a kind master; twelve months after, perhaps, the estate is sold. The new landlord, eager to make the most of his purchase, may remove whole villages into the marshes, and take possession himself of the cultivated ground. He will probably make contracts with Government for brandy, and by that means ruin all his peasants. He may

likewise grub up new land, build houses; in a word, destroy in the space of two or three years the prosperity and happiness that had been the growth of twenty.

I call upon the whole province to refute me, if they are able. What I am asserting is unfortunately too true; I have seen it. I have been a sad witness to such practices for the space of fifteen years. But notwithstanding this, I am far from exclaiming, like M. de M***, that the condition of the peasantry can never be bettered, except by tedious and painful measures. I am of a different opinion: I agree with him, that such reform must be *gradually* brought about. The best, and indeed the majority of the Russian nobility have made overtures in several diets, tending to such purpose, which were equally wise and humane; and the time, I trust, is not far distant,

in which the complaints of the peasants will be heard and their wrongs redressed.

I shall venture to propose four easy methods, which, without doing any real injury to either party, would secure a kind of property to the bondman, and restrain the despotism of his lord; and I must at the same time declare, that more than what I have to offer could not with safety be done for the peasant in the present order of things.

First. No peasant should be transported from one habitation to another.

At present, as I have already observed, the barbarous custom of removing the boor from the spot which he and his ancestors had cultivated, unhappily prevails. He has occupied a house, and had a little garden, perhaps, which he considered as his own property. On a sudden he receives an order to demolish

his house, abandon his cultured ground, and to remove with his family into a forest, or perhaps into the middle of a moor, to grub up new land, which the moment it becomes productive is again taken from him. In the mean while, his Lord sows and reaps the field which the poor peasant had been compelled to quit.

Hence the labourer being never certain of enjoying the fruits of his toil, is generally idle, and provides only from day to day. The most flourishing villages that have been transplanted in this manner, have, in a very short space of time, exhibited the most deplorable pictures of misery.

The Estonian nobles will reply to this, that a good landlord will make no such changes. I allow this, yet must add, that he ought not to have it in his power to make them. But it will be said, that

a good master will not make a bad use of that right; yet it may be still observed that he cannot answer for his heirs and successors, and that there is no reason why a duty, which every honest man considers as a law, ſhould not in fact become one.

Secondly. Let the soccage-labour, which hitherto has depended on the arbitrary will of the landlord, be in future regulated by fixed rules.

There is indeed a book in every lordship, in which the sum total of the soccage-work is inserted; but this labour is doubled during seed-time and manuring, and also during harvest, which, in other words, is during the whole summer; for a landlord who prefers his own interest, knows how to regulate the above-mentioned periods, so that scarcely any interval appears. The landlord has likewise another expedient at com-

mand, which enables him to elude the written ordinances. He has the right of imposing certain days of labour, independent of the soccage-days, on which the peasant, with his whole family male and female, must assist him. The peasant too is obliged to repair in person at every call of his Lord, to build for him, carry his produce to market, distil brandy, and, in short, to perform offices not at all comprized under the name of agriculture. The number of these extra-days is quite unlimited, and the peasant's own labour in the mean while is interrupted, his field remains untilled, his affairs are neglected, and it often happens that the snow covers his little crop before he is able to get it into his barn. In fine, the book contains no certain rules for soccage-work of any kind, as every new possessor is not obliged to abide by the stipulations sanc-

tioned by his predecessor: he makes new regulations, which he forms agreeably to his own will.

Thirdly. There should be no public-houses in the villages.

All the Estonian nobles complain of the drunkenness of the peasantry, and of their total want of morals. They universally agree that the principal cause of this evil must be ascribed to the public-houses, and that the villages in which there are none, are remarkable for the good order and easy circumstances of the inhabitants. Yet in spite of this conviction, the little profits they gain by the establishment of such houses, prevent them from abolishing so manifest an abuse. They have public-houses by the hundred along the high roads, yet they cannot come to a resolution to give up those in the by-villages, though they would eventually be gainers.

The inconvenience of public-houses in villages has been so generally acknowledged, that at a late Diet a motion was made to abolish them; but the result of the discussion was, that it was found the article of brandy must be raised a few copecks a gallon, in order to indemnify the distillers for its diminished consumption—a remedy which was thought worse than the evil itself!

Fourthly. The landlords should not be allowed to make more brandy than they can distil from rye of their own growth.

The speculations which are made in spirituous liquors, independently of the bad consequences which fall on the peasant, often ruin his Lord. He commonly makes a contract with Government for six years, in which he undertakes to furnish brandy at a stipulated price, which, at the time the business

begins, seems to promise much gain. Should a year of scarcity intervene, the markets rise, and he is obliged to buy grain at any rate; for the moment he fails in his engagements, the Crown lays his estates under sequestration, and purchases brandy at his cost, to supply the necessary consumption. Thus is the land-holder liable to sink in one single year the gains of the other five; nor does it always happen that his profits are sufficient to make his losses good. I know not a single noble who has grown rich, but many who have been ruined, by such speculations.

The nobles of Estonia will observe in reply, that they should have no manure for their grounds unless they fattened oxen, and that they could not fatten oxen without the assistance of their distilleries. Let them be allowed then to distil, provided their own crops supply

the corn; but let them give more attention to the breed of sheep, and less to that of horned cattle, and they will never be in want of manure. They may still reply, that the cattle sent lean from Petersburg to be fattened, produced them ready money (twenty rubles and upwards a-head) whereas in the other case, they would be incumbered with the milk of their flocks. It appears to me, that if they were to make butter and cheese, after the example of the Dutch, the Swedes, the Holsteiners, &c. they might find a quick sale at Petersburg, where the inhabitants are chiefly supplied from Holstein.

A second objection which these nobles may make is, that the landholders at a great distance from Petersburg, being inconveniently situated for brandy-contracts, would not know what to do with their grain if they did not sell

it to such as lived nearer the metropolis, who had contracts, and whose estates did not produce grain sufficient to fulfil them. Were they not to dispose of their corn in this manner, the markets, they will tell us, would be overstocked and agriculture in general much injured. This objection, however, is more specious than solid; for where grain is scarce, it bears a high price, and where it is had in plenty, exportation is always allowed, and Sweden, England, Germany, and other countries, are eager enough to purchase it.

These hints contain all that is necessary to be said on the subject, and I am fully convinced, that if the nobles of Estonia would agree among themselves to adopt the measures I have recommended, they would soon feel the salutary effects of them. Two hundred

thousand slaves would obtain a species of property, and transfer it to their children after them. They would grow active and laborious; moral sentiments would begin to influence their minds as soon as they should feel themselves no longer the victims to a more arbitrary despotism than that which the Emperor himself chuses to exert. They would no longer perish for want, were their soccage-labour properly regulated, as they would then have sufficient leisure for the tillage of their own fields. They would learn to love their lords, and their lords would have confidence in them; and at length be no longer considered by all Europe, as a class of petty tyrants and oppressors. After ten or twenty years adoption of such measures, they may venture to proceed further in favour of their boors, and at last raise them to a degree of moral improvement

which would not only repay their care in an interested point of view, but gratify the noblest feeling the mind is capable of enjoying; a consciousness of having fulfilled the sacred duties of humanity, and of deserving the multiplied benedictions that will fall upon their head!

The Estonian nobility are far from being insensible to such elevated kind of recompense: they have hitherto merely wanted resolution to adopt what they felt it their duty to do; but the reign of Alexander will act as a powerful stimulus to such benevolent propensities, and much happiness may be yet in store for their peasantry!

I cannot better close my work than with the extract of a letter which the present Emperor lately wrote to a nobleman who had solicited the hereditary possession of an estate.

"The Russian peasants are in general "no better than slaves, and I need not "enlarge upon the degradation and "wretchedness of such a condition. I "have made a vow not to augment the "number of them, and have therefore "adopted the resolution of never trans- "ferring them away as property to any "man. The estate shall be granted to "you and your heirs at a long lease and "quit-rent, which will prove equally "advantageous to you; and the only "difference will be, that the peasants "cannot be sold or alienated like brute "beasts. Such are my reasons, and I "am persuaded they will meet with "your approbation."

Glory and honour to this humane and compassionate Monarch! He will want neither brass nor marble to perpe-

tuate his memory! The sentiments which the above short extract contains, will secure immortality to his name in the bosom of every worthy man!

FINIS.

CON-

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